Meaning amidst Politics:
Exploring the Value of Union Membership for CTA Teachers

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Abstract:

Criticism directed toward the efforts of and motives behind the California Teachers Association has appeared across all forms of media in recent years, capturing the interest of newspaper journalists, bloggers, and economists alike. With a growing presence in Sacramento, an extensive budget, and as a large stakeholder in two major propositions in the 2012 California election, the CTA, a union that represents more than 325,000 California educators, has emerged as a highly watched political force. But what has remained unexplored in recent discussions of the CTA are the opinions of California teachers themselves and the value and meaning that members of the California Teachers Association attach to the state and local union membership and their relationships, roles and interests within these organizations. The exploratory nature of this inquiry draws upon the historical and theoretical foundation of the CTA, especially since the union was allowed to collectively bargain for better wages, benefits and protections with the passage of the Rodda Act in 1975.

This study gives voice to over 130 California high school teachers, concentrated within one of the state’s largest school districts and spanning six high schools that serve a range of socioeconomic communities. Through an anonymous survey comprised of closed and open-ended questions, it strives to uncover how these educators feel about the work being done on their behalf at the local and state level and what impact unionization has had on their relationships with one another. In an effort to determine if/where generational dissimilarities exist between senior and junior teachers, survey responses are reinforced by in-depth interviews with seven voluntary participants, each of whom typify a larger cohort of educators. Surveys and interviews reveal that while significant generational differences exist in terms of experiences with job security, differing levels of overall support for and happiness with the local and state union is not generationally significant. What this body of research does reveal is that there is not one “union” or teacher opinion. The CTA, at both the state and the local level, is comprised of a diverse group of professionals. These constituents, while represented by the same institution through the school district under examination, do not share a united or even a significant majority opinion on issues of state and local union politics, union dues, feelings regarding the impact of the union on teachers’ individual lives, workplace environment or the larger field of education. In other words, there is not one union voice. Instead, there exists a range of voices consistent with the heterogeneity of perspectives expressed by outsiders.
Introduction:

Teachers unions in the United States have faced a range of criticism and support since their inception in the mid 20th century. While traditional American labor unions emerged in response to the harsh working conditions inflicted upon laborers during industrialization and an adversarial relationship between workers and management, teachers are considered civil servants and professionals who have an invested interest in the maintenance and wellbeing of the institution of public education. Teachers participate in professional unionism, which differs from industrial management in its presumed intent—intent to work with rather than against administrators and board members (Kercher and Koppich 12). In the 1960’s and 1970’s, teachers unions began fighting for the right to collectively bargain with their school districts for the terms of their employee contracts—a largely successful battle that marked a significant turning point for teachers and the teaching profession. The CTA was granted collective bargaining rights in 1975, making both the general public and educational management fearful that collective organizing would manifest itself in teacher strikes and the stagnation of teaching (Porcher).

The long-established social perception of teachers as “student-oriented” civil servants seemed incompatible with teachers’ desire to unionize for personal benefit—better wages, benefits, and input in district decision-making (Cooper and Sureau 88). Society’s inability to reconcile the personal and professional interests of teachers created concerns that have persisted for nearly four decades, heightening as teachers unions have increased political power and presence. Advocates of teachers unions argue that these unions are striving to better public education while critics believe that the power of teachers unions has stifled educational reform, academic achievement and adversely impacted the financial well-being of individual states and the nation (Loveless). These feelings are documented by the media, the public, and by union representatives. But what these concerns, and the majority of research aimed at analyzing teacher unionization, fail to adequately address is the voice and the feelings of those people who constitute the union: the individual teachers and local level union members whom all the talk is about.

The state of California, which has endured significant financial hardship since the onset of the Great Recession, has implemented a series of cuts to educational funding throughout the past six years. Layoffs, class-size increases, teacher pay-cuts and widely felt reductions in educational resources and opportunities, have left the CTA with the immense challenge of
upholding its obligations to both teacher and student interests. The CTA, deemed the 6th most powerful teachers union in the United States in 2012 (Winkler, Skull, Zeehandelaar), has fought at the legislative and electorate level throughout the recession, most recently leveraging more than $21 million to support the successful Yes on Proposition 30 and No on Proposition 32 campaigns. The extensive involvement of the CTA in the aforementioned campaigns has fueled accusations and beliefs about the negative impact and disproportionate power of the CTA and, consequently, the teachers the union represents.

Journals, magazines, and newspapers have spoken out against the work and political clout of the CTA. Journalist Troy Senik calls the CTA “the worst union in America” that has “betrayed the schools and crippled the state” while Michael J. Mishak, a writer for the traditionally more-liberal Los Angeles Times, claims that the “CTA can make or break all sorts of deals [in Sacramento]… [using its] institutionalized clout, deep pockets and mass membership largely to protect the status quo.” This status quo often refers to the use of seniority in employment decision-making, minimum oversight of teaching staff by administrators, and maximum protection of teachers in grievance disputes (Lieberman 125). Many members of the media and union-critics such as Lieberman credit a perceived stalemate in educational progress to the CTA. On the flip side, the CTA believes the lobbying power of CTA President Joe Nunez in Sacramento, union-backed victories for increased educational funding, as well as CTA advocacy for a quality learning and working environment for both students and teachers, stand as testimony to the strong fight that the CTA continues to pursue on behalf of the interests of teachers and students. This research explores and documents a third and previously unconsidered viewpoint on the actions and agenda of the CTA—the opinions, experiences and allegiance that teachers themselves have to their local and state union and what impact the union has on teachers’ individual lives and relationships with one another. Through survey generation and in-depth interviewing of representative union members within one California school district, this study strives to give a voice to some of the many teachers whose employment, existence, and union dues are fueling state-long disagreement.

This paper explores the following questions:

1. What does the CTA look like in California schools? How do teachers “unionize” in their communities, around, within, or beside the issues the CTA is involved with in Sacramento?
2. What does the CTA mean to the teachers it represents? How do teachers view the union in relation to their interests, jobs, and relationships with one another?

3. What do teachers think about the recent criticism of the CTA? Do these opinions differ along generational lines?

**Literature Review**

This literature review and the subsequent field-work is grounded in the historical developments that have led to the modern California Teachers Association, as well as theory concerning union formation, evolution and dynamics. It presents a chronological development of labor unions and teachers unions in the United States, highlighting the inception and evolution of the CTA, as well as theoretical explanations for the CTA’s existence and power. These historical and theoretical findings guide the report’s investigation of the present day experiences and feelings of union members teaching within California high schools.

**Historical Developments**

**Early Development and Theory of Labor Unions**

When the American economy shifted towards industrialization in the mid 19th century, the power dynamics and relationship between laborers and management became a major social issue. Upset over dangerous working conditions, poor wages, and lack of employee protections created what Bruce S. Cooper and John Sureau describe as a “politics of fear” between laborers (the majority and socio-economically disadvantaged) and managers (the decision-makers and minority.) While workers fear being overworked, underpaid and fired without cause, employers fear worker-strikes and rebellions resulting in the destruction or halt of production (86). Both the Knights of Labor and American Federation of Labor were founded in the late 1800’s in response to industrialization, and focused on uniting laborers around the organization of strikes. Through the Wagner Act, President Delano Roosevelt afforded labor unions legal protection to organize.  

Marx and Engels theorized about the impact capitalist worker-laborer tensions would create in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), where they discussed the growing historical inequality between the bourgeoisie and the proletariats in Europe and the continuation of class struggle in the capitalist economic order. Under this theory of labor relations, “oppressor and
oppressed, [stand] in constant opposition to one another, [carry] on an uninterrupted, now hidden, now open fight, a fight that each time [ends], either in a revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes” (14). This theory promotes the belief that the greed of management (the oppressor) will eventually result in laborers (the oppressed) rebelling in numbers against said greed and inequality and overthrowing those in power—a tension and battle that Marx and Engels thought would lead to the end of Capitalism and acquisition of Communism.

**Labor Union Theory Implications for Teacher Unionization**

The working conditions presumed by Marxian theory do not perfectly accommodate the unionization of teachers who, unlike laborers, are civil servants and who historically have had an invested interest in the maintenance of the institution of public education. The adversarial motivation for unionization that was foundational in many early labor unions and in Marxian theory of labor relations cannot be applied to teachers. This key difference between unionized teachers and laborers contributed to teachers’ exclusion from protection under the Wagner Act. The Wagner Act explicitly limited protections to private sector employees (FDR Library).

Professional unions through which teachers collectively bargain and the industrial unions that were guarded under the Wagner Act both share in and diverge along their purported goals. Instead of organizing against their employers, as industrial unions traditionally have, professional teachers unions intend to work with those in power (Kercher and Koppich 12). Despite this major difference, both union types exist to improve working conditions for a group by uniting people “who possess a set of values or norms for regulating their behavior, at least in matters of consequence to the group” (Sherif and Sherif 131). In her 1997 comparative study of unions and professional associations, Tina Maragou Hoveka notes that self-interest has always been a key factor in joining both professional associations and unions. But while industrial unions have always been transparent in their desires to improve wages, benefits, and quality of life for workers, professional associations have indirectly aimed for similar worker-benefits. Functioning under a veil of goodness, professional teachers’ unions are directed toward improving professional image and education, but they also strive for their profession’s upward mobility and economic rewards (237). This tension is very obvious around the CTA: its mission to improve education for children and its mission to fight for teacher-benefits, regardless of
perceived legitimacy, seem to be a core source of the wider public’s resentment directed toward the union.

The public continues to struggle with the intersecting identities of modern-day CTA members, who are both civil servants and tax-paying, “normal” people, while Hoveka notes that the superficial intent of labor unions and professional associations and the collective bargaining power that characterizes modern teachers unions do not functionally deviate from the long-established intent of all employees—personal gain. In The Logic of Collective Action (1965) Manur Olson speaks to this belief, noting that a public good alone has never been sufficient motivation for an individual to join an interest group. The betterment of a child’s education may be one incentive for joining the CTA, but collective bargaining benefits, or some other direct personal gain, are necessary for generating union membership. And while the public has traditionally feared that teachers’ hard-fought battle for collective bargaining rights is incompatible with the teaching profession’s student-oriented presentation (Cooper and Sureau 88), implying that the two goals cannot exist simultaneously, the CTA’s public fight for and eventual receipt of collective bargaining rights really signaled a public acknowledgement of the same dual-interests teachers have always possessed. Teachers, whether a part of an association or a union, have consistently been interested in both protecting and improving education and protecting and improving conditions for themselves.

**CTA- The Evolution**

Founded during the Civil War, the CTA, formerly known as the California Educational Society, has been politically active since its inception. In its online historical timeline, the organization notes some of its earliest legislative successes to include: providing free public schools to California children, free textbooks for grade-school children and establishing a tenure-system for state teachers. It was not until after a series of strikes and a massive movement of collective organizing that teachers won the right to collectively bargain in 1975. It was at this point that Journalist Troy Senik remarks, “the CTA began its transformation.” The CTA corroborates the importance of collective bargaining rights for the overall power of the state union, noting that within 18 months of the Rodda Act’s passage, 600 of the 1,000 local level union chapters transitioned to collective bargaining. Membership rates skyrocketed from about 170,000 in the late 1970’s to the more than 325,000 members the CTA has today (Senik). With greater numbers came greater funding and greater political power for the CTA. For the CTA, and
consequently, for this study, the union’s acquisition of collective bargaining rights are of paramount importance.

Collective Bargaining: In Theory & Function-

In theory, collective bargaining provides teachers equal input in the discussion of employee contracts, a right that has greatly empowered teachers unions since the pre-bargaining era. This practice has shifted power from administrators to unions and was not anticipated by Marx’s theory of labor dynamics. Before teachers had collective bargaining power, school administrators “bargain[ed] in good faith” to reach decisions regarding classroom policies and teacher contracts (Lieberman 121). Teachers were provided their employment contracts, generally without room to negotiate its terms. Today, collective bargaining allows negotiating to occur traditionally and/or collaboratively (Hess and Kelly 54).

Traditional bargaining occurs when teachers and management have conflicting viewpoints or interests and is more analogous to adversarial union-management interactions in industrial sectors. Collaborative bargaining is defined as a flexible problem-solving process during which teachers and administrators focus on their common ground to address issues. Hess and Kelly believe that bargaining in teachers unions usually includes a combination of the two bargaining methods. These authors elaborate on this belief, explaining, “teachers unions exist neither to defend children nor to plunder the public treasury… they are committed entities created to serve the needs of members” (54). Consequently, bargaining strategies for these unions are fluid, shifting according to the union’s recognized priorities and the level of shared interest in that issue between the union and the district. Whether or not the “needs of members” or union priorities contradict, complement, or benignly impact student achievement and educational experiences remain contested amongst labor theorists. The CTA covers a wide range of issues on its website, from education reform, to retirement benefits, to teacher evaluations to collective bargaining and even expanding to issues of gay marriage, abortion and environmental issues. The CTA’s published stance on these issues implies that they have been identified as the “needs of its members,” but whether or not the work of the CTA satisfies the “needs of its [local level] members” remains unchartered, and is a point of exploration in this study. As there are hundreds of thousands of CTA educators with differing years of experience as members, Marc Sternberger, a CTA activist for 30 years, raises an important point for the examination of membership satisfaction. Said Sternberger: “Some CTA members, especially younger teachers,
may not know that the rights they take for granted were won on picket lines, in courtrooms, and in hard-fought political campaigns decades ago.” This comment, and the experiential reality it illuminates, suggests the potential for a generational difference in satisfaction with and appreciation for CTA membership and its political efforts. This project explores if conflicting attitudes regarding CTA membership do, in fact, exist between “younger” and senior teachers. Political Efforts and Implications-

“At the ballot box, CTA members are a force,” claims the CTA on its official website. Research suggests that the general California public would not refute this claim—but the qualifying level of approval that the general public has for the CTA’s power is certainly not uniform across the larger population. In fact, the public appears somewhat opposed to the union’s “force” at the ballot box. Berube attributes decreased public approval of the teaching profession in general to the union’s shift into politics. He notes that in 1984 less than 50% of parents believed that becoming a teacher was a “notable” career while, 15 years previous, 75% of parents felt that becoming a teacher was a “notable” career (12). Journalists Troy Senik and Michael Mishak have explicitly stated their disapproval of the CTA’s growing power, a power that revealed itself in the impressive CTA accomplishments of 2012.

The CTA championed two major victories on November 6, 2012—Yes on Proposition 30 and No on Proposition 32. Proposition 30 includes provisions to increase state taxes and allocate 89% of these tax increases to public education (California Voter Guide). Proposition 32, though unsuccessful, would have outlawed union and corporate contributions to politicians and would have banned compulsory deductions of employee wages (such a union dues) for political purposes. The CTA argued that 32 would have had a far more considerable impact on union members, teachers and the middle class, than corporate interests. The November election was participatory, not legislative, and required the support of California teachers and California citizens to achieve these union-backed victories. In light of these most recent developments, and the well-voiced opinions of CTA representatives and CTA critics on the union strength these victories reveal, this study explores the feelings and opinions that individual teachers and groups of teachers have toward the political efforts of the CTA and whether or not local level teachers voted in alliance with the union on these two propositions. Driven by Collective Action Theory, this body of research examines how representative the institutional CTA voice is of ground-level CTA members.
As the CTA expands in size and membership, Mancur Olson’s Collective Action Theory pertaining to membership in large groups becomes especially relevant. This theory challenged conflict theory’s beliefs regarding the implications that power and subordination have for union dynamics. Whereas the conflict theory according to Ralf Dahrendorf holds that collectively organized individuals with a common goal will contribute equal work toward achieving that goal (Keel), Olson asserts in his text that collective gain alone is not sufficient to motivate collective action, especially if the good being worked towards will be shared equally amongst members regardless of group contribution. According to Olson, large groups aimed at collective action are likely to be characterized by: free riders, people who want to reap the benefits of collective action without actively participating; disengagement by members of the large group who struggle to relate the larger group to their daily lives and individual interests; and the ability of a minority to dominate the majority. With membership numbers above 325,000, the CTA is certainly a large group.

And within this large group, up and down a very vast and diverse state, there exist schools, school districts, and counties with social and organizational dissimilarities that manifest themselves in different instructional goals, ideas of professionalism, and professional communities between teachers (Bascia 6). These local needs create smaller environments whose interests may not align with the interests of other teacher communities, or the interests of the representative state voice. The lack of homogeneity across and within local teacher communities can create disconnect between the political agenda of the CTA, the desires and decisions of local union representatives and the interests of individual teachers. While there exists a democratic process for electing union representatives both within a local-level union and for representation of a local-level union to the CTA, the perceived quality of representation is unclear.

Union representation varies from state to state, in some districts requiring only a simple majority for a representative to be elected and to be able to bargain on behalf of all district teachers (National Institute for Labor Relations Research). The National Institute for Labor Relations Research notes that labor unions can serve as exclusive representatives of teacher interests, can vote on behalf of an individual and for a policy, contract, or along an ideological
line that an individual teacher represented by the organization does not share. Functionally, teachers pay for services that they may or may not want.

According the California Teachers Association, the CTA is organized at the local level, with more than 1,100 chapters statewide. These chapters are responsible for electing nearly 800 delegates of the State Council of Education, which meets four times per year to discuss policy-making issues and elect the three officers and 21 board of directors who oversee 500 CTA staff members. Local union organizations establish election-procedures that meet their needs, generally breaking down into committees headed by elected union members. Within this study, the level of satisfaction that individual members have with their representation is explored within one school district—a district intentionally selected for its local level political action. Within this district, seniority-based decision-making, a longstanding CTA policy, is closely assessed.

Teacher seniority, occupational security and teacher evaluations have long been key objectives of the CTA. A scholar traditionally critical of teachers unions, Myron Lieberman notes that unions generally aim towards maintaining seniority as a deciding factor in employment issues and establishing minimum oversight by administrators of teaching staff and maximum protection of teachers in grievance issues (125). Lieberman argues that these union policies may directly conflict with the best interest of students (133). In their research, Hess and Kelly found that while accusations that the existence and functioning of teachers unions contribute to decreased educational achievement, inefficient workspaces, protect ineffective educators, and restrict good management are commonplace, they were unable to substantiate many of these claims (54). Through open-ended survey responses and in-depth interviews, this study draws upon at the feelings of local CTA members, who have either benefitted from and/or experienced decreased job security as a result of union policies, and explores what, if any, impact these union decisions and policies have had on their work environments and feelings toward union membership. As a closed-shop state, it is required that California teachers maintain a minimum level of union contribution: they must pay for local-level collective bargaining efforts, making union participation, on some level, mandatory for California teachers.

Compulsory Union Due Withdrawals & CTA Sentiment -

The lack of individual agency that accompanies compulsory union contributions and mandatory union-fee withdrawals from teacher paychecks raises unanswered questions—How do teachers feel about their membership in the local, state, and national teachers unions? How
much of a choice and voice do memberships feel they have in light of the established state policies regarding automatic fee withdrawals? According to the National Institute for Labor Relations Research, the chiefs of the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers, the two national-level teachers unions, have directly stated that they do not wish for any non-union member to be teaching in American schools. While federal Right to Work laws protect the right of teachers to choose whether or not to join a union, in 19 states, unions are allowed to forcibly remove fees from teacher salaries. The Legal Defense Fund, a non-profit, legal advocacy group, reports that, in the state of California, California teachers must automatically have full membership dues deducted from their paychecks but may opt to be refunded compulsory union dues directed towards political rather than collective bargaining purposes at the end of each year. Collecting compulsory dues allows local unions to serve as the sole negotiator for teacher contracts and benefits.

In California, every local CTA affiliate chapter is connected to the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association. At the local level, school districts and local union representatives have exclusive power to negotiate on behalf of all teachers on issues of pay, benefits, and working conditions (California Teachers Empowerment Network). Unless teachers personally pursue an alternative to full membership each year, California teachers automatically contribute to both political and non-political union activities. Dues are extracted from teacher paychecks each month. Those teachers who wish to have decreased affiliation with the union have two membership alternatives: paying a Fair Share or Agency Fee, which results in an annual refund for all dues not related to collective bargaining; enlisting as a “religious/conscientious objector” and directing compulsory union fees towards a charitable organization of the teachers’ choosing. Teachers who opt for an alternative to full union membership are not able to vote or run in union elections and are not provided union insurance and legal representation. These individuals can secure liability insurance and legal representation by joining professional organizations (California Teachers Empowerment Network, 2012.) The Legal Defense Fund notes that most teachers who do choose to withdraw from full union membership still pay more than 60% of union membership fees towards collective bargaining and contract negotiations—creating a potential point of contention amongst teachers.

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The California Teachers Association exists at the intersection of several points of tension. Navigating between the expectations of professional associations and labor unions, striving to represent hundreds of thousands of school employees up and down a diverse state, and operating in a state in which union membership for educators is to some extent, involuntary, poses an interesting challenge to union leaders, union members, and the California public. It reinforces the overarching question that guides this study’s research: what does the union really mean to those whom it represents?

Driven primarily by Manur Olson’s Collective Action Theory and Tina Maragou Hoveka’s beliefs regarding necessary motivation for union membership, this study contextualizes these broader theories within the confines of one state-long professional union, one local level union, and the individual lives of the teachers the two organizations represent. In light of CTA’s longstanding prioritization of union-based decision-making and the disproportionate number of junior employees who have suffered at the expense of that policy, this exploratory project examines the impact of age and experience on motivation for union membership and participation. By giving a voice to local level union members spanning the spectrum of union involvement, it aims to begin breathing life back into the union Troy Senik claims is “failing California.”

**Methodology:**

In order to give voice to a range of union members, this explorative study utilized a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Through an anonymous online survey comprised of 12 closed and open-ended questions, trends in union participation, experience, and opinions were identified. In identifying these trends, particular attention was paid to if/where generational differences existed between “junior” and “senior” teachers. Within these surveys, participants could indicate their willingness to participate in a confidential in-depth interview by voluntarily providing their preferred contact information. Once general cohorts of teachers were identified from survey analysis, willing participants who represented these cohorts were contacted for in-depth interviewing. While surveying played an essential role in distinguishing general union sentiments and broader trends, the real meaning of union membership was more substantially illuminated during the interview process.
Site Selection:

This study was conducted within one of California’s largest public school districts. The sample district was selected due to its large size and the relatively diverse socioeconomic populations it serves. The district, which includes 12 cities and more than 50,000 students, is comprised of more than 50 public schools—serving primarily white, non-Hispanic and Latino populations. In addition, the sample district has a recent history of political action at the local level, which has brought many education-based political issues into the lives of local level teachers. The local union represents district teachers, psychologists, speech pathologists, counselors, librarians, and nurses working at the elementary, middle and high school level. Due to time constraints, the study was limited to high school teachers working within the district’s six high schools. The district, which will henceforth be referred to by its given pseudonym, Unified School District, or USD, and the local union, which will henceforth be referred to by its given pseudonym, Educators United, or EU, have experienced a strained and at times combative relationship in recent history. The apex of this struggle between the district and the union was a district-wide strike that took place within the last five years, during which nearly 90% of teachers district-wide did not report to work. This publicized struggle between USD and EU, rooted in collective bargaining and contract disagreements, represents the general tension between school districts and local level unions in the face of the Great Recession and the consequent funding cuts for public education.

Participants and Sampling:

The participants of this study were all high school teachers and contracted employees within USD. All potential participants were individually contacted via their district email addresses, public information that is provided on each high school’s website. In this initial contact, targeted participants were informed of the interviewer’s background, the project’s intent, and were informed how important it was to generate survey responses from teachers spanning all levels of union participation and union interest. Further, potential participants were assured that in filling out the 100% anonymous Survey Monkey survey, that their identity and the identity of their school and district would never be revealed. At the end of the survey, participants were asked to provide their name and preferred contact information if they might be willing to

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2 To order to protect the identity of the sample district, further demographics, details and specific citations suggesting its identity have been necessarily omitted.
participate in an in-depth interview regarding their survey responses. Respondents were promised 100% confidentiality if they chose to attach their specific identity to their responses and offered to participate in an in-depth interview. After survey analysis, seven teachers were selected for interviews. The seven participants were informed by email of general interview procedure and question types before the interview took place. Teachers were informed in-person that they had the right to decline a response to any interview question and were asked if they felt comfortable having their interview voice recorded. All seven interviews were recorded.

**Surveys:**

The teacher survey was dispersed via email, and provided every district teacher with the opportunity to participate. In order to ensure anonymity, Survey Monkey, an online surveying program that password protects all responses, was utilized. Survey questions were both closed and open-ended. Quantitative questions, most of which included an optional commentary or disclaimer box, included:

1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. How many of those years have been in USD?
3. Are you a member of the California Teachers Association?
4. If you are a union member, do you feel you had an option to either join or to not join the union?
5. What do you believe are the most important issues for the union to focus on? (Please rank so that #1 is the most important issue and #6 is the least important issue.)
6. On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being very displeased and 10 being fully pleased, how happy are you with your local union?
7. How involved are you in your local union?
8. How did you vote on Proposition 30?
9. How did you vote on Proposition 32?
10. What is your political affiliation?

Open-ended questions included:

1. How well do you believe your dues are being used at the state and local level?
2. What, if any, impact has the union had on your working environment?

At the end of every survey, participants were asked to provide their contact information if they would be willing to discuss their responses and experiences in an in-depth interview.
Survey Analysis:

After reaching a 28% response rate, the empirical data was analyzed in three major groups. First, averages and trends were identified for the group at large. Then, the responses were broken down into two groups: “junior” respondents and “senior” respondents. Surveys suggested that the district’s “junior” teachers fell within 1-10 years of teaching experience. “Senior” teachers were identified as teaching for 20+ years. Across the group and within the selected generations, themes regarding local union experiences, local union satisfaction, sentiments toward the CTA, and feelings regarding union membership appeared. From these responses, “cohorts” were created, and individual teachers identified as representing a larger group in terms of level of union support, union involvement and teaching experience, were contacted individually for an in-person interview. In total, 137 teachers responded to the survey, making the final response rate 31%.

Interviews:

While survey responses did not uncover quantifiably significant generational differences in union sentiment, involvement, and support, outside research on state-long trends in funding and job security suggested that there might exist experiential differences between “junior” and “senior” teachers and union members. In order to determine if generational differences in union sentiment, involvement and support would present themselves at the conversational level, seven in-depth interviews were conducted. Survey responses did indicate that delineations in membership satisfaction existed amongst all survey participants and from those responses the following seven individuals were selected:

1. Junior- happy union member, involved, values align with union
2. Junior- unhappy union member, involved, values align with union
3. Junior- uninvolved union member, values don’t align with union
4. Middle- outspoken non-member, values don’t align with union
5. Senior- happy union member, involved, values align with union
6. Senior- disenchanted union member, uninvolved, values align with union
7. Senior- uninvolved union member, values don’t align with union

These members were identified and selected as a result of their survey responses and the fact that their responses suggested that they represent a larger cohort of teachers.
Each interviewee’s in-person, in-depth interview was framed by their individual survey responses with an emphasis placed on trends identified throughout the participant’s larger cohort. In many ways, survey responses began the conversation between interviewer and interviewee that was continued over the course of a 30-90 minute in-depth, story-telling interview. Within each interview, intentional inquiry was directed toward the interviewees personal experiences as a union member; the impact of union activities and politics, including the district-wide strike, on work environment and colleague relationships; sentiments toward the state-wide union; and overall happiness with membership and representation.

**Interview Analysis:**

After all seven interviews were transcribed, this qualitative data was analyzed three times, in accordance with methods exercised during survey analysis. First, all interviews were analyzed for overall trends and variations. Second, “junior” and “senior” interviews were isolated and examined individually and comparatively in search for commonalities and deviations in teacher experiences surrounding the union and teacher sentiment regarding the work and role of the local and state union on individual lives, work environments and professional image. While experiences of the two groups did differ in terms of job security, it became clear at the conversational level that each teacher’s personal lives, work community, and individual experiences differed without generational significance. Essentially, each union member has had a unique set of life and professional experiences and an individual set of “stories” that contribute to the value he/she places on union membership. As a result, emphasis in summarizing survey and interview findings has been placed on the various levels or domains at which union members unionize or feel the impact of their membership. These domains were identified as (1) Local Level- District-Wide Union, (2) Campus Level, (3) CTA at Local Level, (4) CTA at the State level, (5) Individual Level.

**Findings and Analysis:**

The key findings of this study are described first at the survey level, noting quantifiable similarities and differences amongst senior and junior teachers. As the “meaning” of union membership was much more apparent at the qualitative level, emphasis in describing the impact of union membership at the five identified levels/domains will primarily utilize open-ended survey responses and interview data. The implications of these findings will be discussed collectively in the final Analysis subsection.
Turning Feelings into Numbers – Does Seniority Matter?

While the severe cuts have been made to funding for public education in California over the past seven years have significantly affected teachers collectively, junior teachers have disproportionately been impacted by budget cuts, facing nearly a decade of decreased job-security. This study anticipated that the impact of the longstanding union-supported policy of seniority-based decision-making on the disproportionate number of junior teacher layoffs would create divides amongst junior and senior teachers along quantifiable lines. Overall, survey findings, which are presented graphically in Appendices A-C, did not conclusively determine that such divides exist. The surveys did generate a collection of noteworthy statistical findings that were further explored at the qualitative level. In total, 97.8% of all respondents are union members, with membership rates at 98% for junior and 100% for senior teachers. Those individuals who are non-members are referred to as “Agency Fee Payers,” and are still required by law to contribute to local collective bargaining efforts. When union members were asked in the survey if they felt that becoming a union member was a choice, 55% of all respondents said “yes.” While 69% of senior and 42% of junior teachers felt that joining the union was a choice, many participants qualified their “yes” response with statements such as this one:

“Technically, you have the option, but you have to pay dues no matter what. There’s really no sense in not joining the union since you’re paying for it no matter what; there is no advantage given to someone who doesn’t join.”

- 11-15 years teaching, not involved, not many feelings regarding the union another teacher noted:

“You join in case of a strike or a parent sues you. Otherwise it is a waste of money.”

– 6-10 years teaching, not involved, not many feelings regarding the union

Additionally, both union members and Agency Fee Payers were asked to rank their “happiness” with the work of their local union, and responses between junior and senior teachers varied only slightly. Overall, survey participants ranked their happiness at a 6.35 on a scale of one-to-ten, while junior teachers ranked their happiness at a 6.6 and senior teachers, at a 6.3. Both groups identified the union’s role in negotiating salaries and benefits as being of upmost importance: 79% of junior teachers and 83% of senior teachers ranked the issue of either #1 or #2 importance.
With the high number of Reduction-in-Force, or RIF, notices that have been dispersed on a seniority-basis, this study hypothesized that seniority-based decision-making and teacher evaluations would be of much greater importance to junior teachers than senior teachers. While more junior teachers than senior teachers ranked both issues either #1 or #2 in terms of importance, a relatively low number of both groups highly ranked either issue. 18% of junior and 8% of senior teachers ranked seniority based decision making as a #1 or #2 priority issue and 38% of junior and 29% of senior teachers ranked teacher evaluations as a #1 or #2 priority issue. The two groups did significantly differ in terms of “union involvement.” Overall, 42% of teachers said that they attended at least some union activities. For senior teachers, that number was 54% whereas for junior teachers, that number was 33%. Still, in the “optional comments” section that followed the survey, some junior teachers made note that their involvement in other campus activities and their young families, rather than disinterest in the union, inhibited their level of participation.

Survey responses generated a sizeable body of interesting data, in large part because responses did not generate the generational deviations this study anticipated. Instead of revealing obvious quantifiable differences between the feelings of junior and senior union members, survey data indicated that seniority does not have a significant impact on differing levels of membership satisfaction. Rather, differing feelings regarding membership were found within and between junior and senior cohorts. These two generations, while having different professional experiences due to union policies, were not found to have one cohesive or dominant generational feeling and outlook on the impact and value of CTA and local union membership. This surprising finding, as well as the lack of insight into the value of membership for local level union members that the survey provided, made further qualitative inquiry essential. While the survey’s numerical responses, yes or no questions, and fragmented qualifying remarks did not offer extensive explanation for the meaning making process of union membership for teachers, it did generate trends and identifiable cohorts from which selection of interview-participants was made meaningful rather than simply a random selection. Guided by survey data and the pool of self-selected willing interview participants, the significance behind numerical rankings and self-identification under the constraints of established categories was explored in greater detail. The potential existence of generational differences in union sentiment and the breadth of factors that
contribute to meaning-formation was therefore further pursued and more substantially revealed through in-depth interviews.

**Contextualizing Classifications, Uncovering Individuality- In-Depth Interviews**

In selecting participants for interviews, emphasis was placed on one top priority: representation of the larger survey sample. A range of involved and uninvolved, supportive and non-supportive, disenchanted union-supporters and those fundamentally opposed to union politics, whom primarily fell within the identified junior and senior focus groups, were chosen without much knowledge of the lives and experiences of interviewees. But over the course of more than six hours of conversations, from behind tears, and through the animated story-telling of individual union members, one overwhelming trend appeared: union members, most notably, those with similar amounts of seniority and who have endured similar political and economic environments throughout their careers, direct different emotions toward their local and state union. For members, personal values and individual experiences play a much larger role in the formation of union sentiment than does the direct impact of union policies on teachers’ professional lives. Within conversation, it became increasing clear that the differing values and sentiments are apparent both within and between generations of educators, as survey responses suggested. Interviewees, while “representatives” of larger groups of teachers, are primarily individuals, and should be known as such.

**Junior Teachers:**

*Meet Mark*- Buried beneath a pile of ungraded essays, sitting amidst a sea of inspirational quotes and student projects, Mark is not only an impassioned AP English teacher, but a campus coach, a parent, and an outspoken and active union participant. “The union hasn’t done anything for me,” Mark said of his seven years spent as a union member. “When I get fired every year, they do nothing. When my status changed, the union did nothing.” And yet, Mark, who attends every campus union meeting and commends the local union for what it has done for teachers collectively, wakes up each morning and asks himself: “Am I working as hard as I can for my kids?” a question to which he confidently can answer “yes, every time.”

*Introducing Tony*- A self-described “Godless hippie,” Tony has taught in both low-income and affluent communities, and notes that his union experiences in the two environments have been “strangely similar.” A sixth year teacher, Tony sees his opportunity to return to his classroom after being RIF’d as “a gift” and regards the impact of the seniority-system on his job
security as him “spending [his] time on the bottom of the pile.” With positive department and campus relationships, Tony participated in the district strike, and, after six years, scored his satisfaction with the local union as a 9/10.

*Here’s Henry*- Henry’s tidy classroom seems a necessary fit for his hectic life, one in which we balances roles as teacher, head coach of a campus sports team, husband, and church attendee. He describes himself as a “hermit” and notes that he hasn’t really “dug deep into the union because [he doesn’t] really see it as [his] niche.” A union member who wishes there were alternative union membership options, as a Republican, Henry feels he’s an “odd fit” in a union that leans largely left. “I’m caught in between,” said Henry, “on one hand, I know unions are necessary, but it seems like it has too much power… and for me, value wise, I’m the square peg trying to be fit into a round hole.”

**Senior Teachers**

*Presenting Ralph*- With more than 20 years of teaching under his belt, Ralph has been around to witnesses the ups-and-downs of public funding for education and the evolution of the CTA. And he’s got a wealth of stories to show for it. Well versed in state and local politics, Ralph points to the success of *Proposition 30* as evidence of the strong work being done by the CTA at the state level. At the local level, Ralph has seen the value of the union in lobbying for teachers and educators. Candidly, he referred to himself and teachers collectively as “stupid and apathetic… just worried about what’s going on in our classrooms” in light of the USD’s past political struggles with an “anti-teacher” school board. Consequently, he, along with a team of fellow teachers and community members, have independently organized and rallied political support for local teacher-supported politicians within the community.

*And then there’s Jim*- Head of his department and a former campus union representative, Jim has since taken a backseat in union activities. After becoming a site rep. to “make sure that [teachers] were getting accurate information,” he noted that as a representative he grew frustrated by not having the “voice” he wanted to have. Serving as a go-to person during the district-wide strike, Jim said, “I would try to let teachers know that it didn’t bother me if they crossed the line or didn’t because I understood the [various personal] decisions that they had to make.” Jim is very protective of his campus family and is tuned in to laws, limitations, and the potential implications of union politics for the lives of teachers.
You can’t forget Charlie- A broad-shouldered man with a kind disposition, Charlie loves his job, his students, his family, and caught himself on the edge of tears whilst describing his experiences with the district-wide strike. “It was horrible,” he said, “I hope I never have to do that again.” Charlie appears disenchanted with union politics and membership and noted that while there’s probably a lot that goes on at both the local and state level that members are not aware of, that it’s difficult to get a sense of where union dues are going and to get details on alternatives to union membership.

Outspoken, Non-Member:

Presenting Peter- A transplant from the world of industry, when he first entered the teaching profession, Peter was a “reluctant member” of the local union. Said Peter, “but then I started noticing how much money was being taken out of my check each month and then I started researching and thought, hey, seemingly every candidate you support is a Democrat and every cause is very liberal and goes against my values.” Since becoming an “Agency Fee Payer,” Peter has used his finance background to analyze the local and state use of member fees and has offered presentations of his findings on his campus. A non-participant in the district-wide strike, Peter notes that his refusal to join his colleagues on the picket lines was not well received. “I’d say about 25% of the people were hostile toward me. Another 25% of the people probably supported me. And 50% of the people didn’t care.” Outspoken and confident, Peter’s generally anti-union sentiment is one he buttresses with economic research and intentional action.

Through the lens of each of these teachers, and snippets provided by survey respondents, this study explores the impact of the California Teachers Association and one of its local chapters on the lives of teachers at the local, district-wide, the campus, and finally, the state level. Each person’s interviews provide a little bit of insight into the hundreds of thousands of experiences and stories that collectively compose the CTA.

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Local, District-Wide Union-

“They are a silent partner. I know that the district would violate our rights if they thought the union wasn’t going to act in our defense. It’s preventative, rather than aggressive.”

- 16-20 years teaching experience, involved, union aligns with values
**District Wide Strike** –

While only 42% of survey respondents said that they attend at least some union activities, USD saw more than 80% participation across all campuses during the district-wide strike. This unprecedented level of local collective action significantly increased the role of union politics in the everyday lives of teachers and impacted the relationships between strikers and non-strikers. For both those who held the line and those who crossed it, the union became more than “something in the background,” a phrase Charlie used to describe his primary relationship with the union over the course of his teaching career. He continued,

“It’s times like [the strike] when I can really see the value of the union. It’s not just every man for himself.” For the most part “I never really get a feel for what [the union’s] doing on a day by day or week by week basis. It seems like a lot of it is a just behind-the-scenes thing going on at the district level. For a lot of teachers, you just teach. You come here, you close your door, and you do what you came to do. Which I think is a benefit. I don’t have to worry about where my contract’s going. I don’t have to worry about that end of things because someone is taking care of it for me. I don’t always agree [with what the union does] but I there’s always a place I can go if I ever get really upset.”

Amidst his personal frustration with the local union, junior teacher Mark complements its work,

“The union has made it so that we have the contract that we have now, that we have the salary and benefits we have now, they’ve been fighting and fighting [for us.]... The way they’ve organized all of the political things, getting board members elected whom we endorse, collectively, the union does its job and it does a great job. Personally for me, I don’t think they’ve been very good.”

**Members’ Voice**–

The union ideal is this: the union is a collective group in which every member has an equal voice. The sentiment that we (the members) are the union, rather than the union being them, a small and select group of decision makers, stands at the core of union ideology. In EU, there exists a democratic process for the election of union representatives, for all members to vote on union issues, and there is a representative-based system through which members can voice questions and concerns. Essentially, the local union is a bureaucratic and institutionalized system with which several interviewees noted frustration, especially concerning the actual manifestation of the union ideal of equal voice for every member. Even as a site representative,
who served as a middleman between the local union and his campus, Jim found himself frustrated with what he perceived to be an inability to achieve his goals.

“As a union rep my number one issue was the size of our dues and what they’re going toward. But I was alone more or less out of a group of 100 site reps or at least was in the very small minority who seemed dissatisfied with how high those dues were and what purposes they were being put towards.”

Mark, who specifically noted “giving teachers more of a voice” as an issue he personally believes should be a top union priority, highlighted the following story as an explanation for his sentiment. At a point at which he was very upset about a union-related issue, Mark wanted to speak with the union president directly. “I went through all the filtered channels,” said Mark, “but I wanted to speak with her, get a couple of minutes. But she wouldn’t take my calls or accept my emails. I had my union rep. even call and she would talk about my issue with him, but not to me directly. So I voiced what I wanted to say to her to my union rep. who then relayed my message to her over the phone.” Mark continued,

“We do have a voice. We do vote on everything. The voting is very organized and well done. And I can go to any of the union reps on campus and suggest to them something I want them to bring up in meetings and I trust that they will, but sometimes, it just feels like no one is listening and that no one cares and that we don’t matter too much. And the theory is that we are the union. In other words, our president is just as important as I am. The union doesn’t exist without us and that’s the problem, it does seem like its us and them and we’re supposed to be one and the same.”

For these members, the role of the local union is felt most significantly within their individual campus communities. It is at the campus level that members feel the biggest impact of union politics, both personally and collectively.

**Unionization at the Campus Level -**

Within their jobs, on their individual campuses, is where union policies and politics, notably, seniority-based decision-making and the district-wide strike, are felt most by teachers. It is here that daily relationships, bonds and divides are formed between teachers and union members. For the individual high schools within USD, two major union issues have pervaded campus relationships. The first of these is the experiences of and relationships between junior and senior teachers during the six consecutive years of Reduction-in-Force, or layoff, notices that
were dispersed throughout the district. The second issue is that of campus environment and teacher relations surrounding each campus’s participation in the district-wide strike. For the vast majority of teachers, engagement as union members occurs solely on their prospective campuses—the same place where they also serve as teachers, friends, coaches, and advisors.

Reduction-in-Force Notices-

The 2012-2013 school year marks the first year in the last seven years that RIF notices will not be dispersed in USD. But for six consecutive, nearly the same group of junior teachers received these notices in mid-March. Denoted “D-Day” by junior teacher Tony, by March 15th for the last six years, a fixed number of teachers district-wide received notice that they did not have a guaranteed job for the subsequent school year. Interviews and open-ended survey responses suggest there exists a mix of animosity, sadness and empathy directed toward campus colleagues and the local union around this issue. Representing a sentiment expressed by a substantial portion of junior teachers who chose to remain anonymous, one survey participant said: “As a laid off teacher for 5 years, I do not feel supported by my union.”

While junior teachers candidly expressed the difficulty of “sweating” their jobs, year after year, senior teachers are not entirely complacent with the RIF process. Empathy on the side of senior teachers was both expressed by senior interviewees and felt by junior participants, but still, differences in perceived and real job security between the two groups was considerable. Even within an empathetic environment, there exist some lingering ill feelings on the side of junior teachers, whose individuality and personal dedication to their work has been entirely overlooked in the union-imposed staff reduction process. Said Mark,

“There’s definitely animosity, a little bit... On one hand, those teachers who have been around awhile were as kind, as encouraging as always. Then again, most of them didn’t really understand what was happening to us year after year. When they’d say, ‘You know, when I first started out, I got RIF’d,’ I thought, ‘Okay, did you get RIF’d six years in a row?... No.’”

Mark further emphasized the frustration that he and his peers felt with those secure senior teachers whom they believe “are not teaching as a part of the profession that [Mark and his peers] hold in high regard.” Both Peter and Charlie, who have been senior enough to avoid the recent series of RIF notices, noted that more senior, tenured teachers are not independently evaluated or administratively held to a high standard in their work. (That certainly is not meant
to imply that senior teachers are not dedicated and effective educators.) Peter and Charlie joked about the “evaluation” process for teachers and commented that any evaluation they had received in teaching had been superficial and insignificant. An impassioned Mark was animated on the issue:

“As a tenured teacher who’s been here a long time, you have to basically rape a child to get fired. We’ve had teachers at this school who literally have come drunk to school, often, or would drink alcohol during the workday, and they weren’t even reprimanded. And I have perfect knowledge of that... And then there’s the other side of the coin: the young teacher who is busting their ass and doing the best job they can and it’s like communism, there’s no reward for it.”

But in contrast to Mark, there’s Tony, who, with one less year of teaching experience describes the RIF process as “nerve racking.” But Tony further notes that without the seniority-based decision making policy, colloquially referred to as “last hired, first fired,” it would be difficult to find an equitable way to make decisions. While acknowledging the personal struggle he’s endured throughout years of RIF notices, Tony describes this phase of his career as “spending [his] time at the bottom of the pile.”

From a business perspective, Peter disagrees with a seniority-based response to budget cuts that eliminates “the newer, some of the more dynamic teachers, in order to protect the salaries and benefits of senior teachers.” He continues:

“My attitude coming out of the business industry is that you pay for performance and if you don’t perform, you shouldn’t get paid. What’s unfair about [teachers’ pay] is that the good teachers should be paid more and the teachers who aren’t performing, however you want to measure that, should be paid less... What really hurts is that the best teachers, the brightest, the most motivated, aren’t compensated for being the best.”

In each anonymous survey, respondents were given the option of describing what, if any, impact they believe the union has had on their work environment. The issue of the union protecting lazy or incompetent teachers, at the expense of other teachers, was echoed throughout levels of seniority. But many others felt that the union had “no impact whatsoever” on them within the context of their campus community. In response to the aforementioned survey question, a senior teacher and involved union member replied:
“Little. Quality of life issues for teachers, like class size, the equitable assignment of extra duty periods (hence, more money), and teacher evaluations are largely ignored [by the union.]”

**District-Wide Strike-**

While the process through which teachers are granted job security and protection generated feelings of resentment, empathy, and understanding amongst both junior and senior teacher, the campus’s district-wide strike made a significant and at times lasting impact on the personal relationships that campus teachers had and have with one another. The strike represented a period of heightened collective action within the local and campus union community, increasing the divide between union supporters and non-supporters, strikers and non-strikers. The event significantly increased solidarity and rifts amongst campus teachers.

Today, years after the conclusion of the strike, in which the union was ultimately successful, its impact continues to be felt by at least some campus teachers.

Experiences surrounding the strike not only varied campus to campus, but individual teacher to individual teacher. While one junior teacher and involved union member recollected, “We went on strike together. We bonded. We have a rad teacher lunch room,” suggesting that the strike was a unifying event for his campus community, not all teachers and campuses had similar experiences. While there was an overwhelming proportion of strike participants and the majority of interviewees saw the strike as a last-resort and necessary act driven by the district’s refusal to negotiate terms of the teacher contract, many teachers did not report positive outcomes of its local impact. Mark noted,

“*A lot of the teachers were totally against each other. The ones who didn’t strike... there’s still animosity to this day. One of our former teachers cornered, and now this is months, maybe even a year after [the strike] was over, he cornered this guy in the men’s room, and the man had just broken both legs on a hiking trip and could barely move. He cornered him and said, ‘I will never fucking forgive you for what you did!’ And man, the guy could barely even walk. The former teacher called him a fucking disgrace because he didn’t strike.’*

Mark, along with Tony and Ralph and Jim and Charlie, all stood out on strike, and watched some of their colleagues pass through the strike line, day after day. For them, the event was not an exciting one, but an unfortunate necessity. For each day of teaching they missed, participants
went unpaid and, for untenured faculty, risked the possibility of dismissal. Capturing the essence of Olson’s Collective Action theory, Tony commented on the collective benefits the strike earned for teachers throughout California by setting a precedent for union and teacher response to a district’s unwillingness to compromise.

“[My friends and I believed] in what the strike represented, even though on the surface, we didn’t get a whole lot. There were teachers who were bitter about that... And the teachers who didn’t strike, I don’t harbor any ill will towards them exactly but I do feel like they didn’t pull their weight. After years of enjoying the benefits of and paying for the union, they just decided to opt out when push came to shove.”

In describing non-strikers, Tony added the following:

“Some people took the chicken way out and took a sick day and there were other teachers who were straight up telling us to go back to work. There was one teacher on staff who did that, and I lost a lot of respect for the guy... Some were afraid of what could happen and decided to go to work. Everyone had their own reasons for supporting it, or not supporting it, but for me, [the strike] had pretty profound implications. I never expected to be on strike, ever.”

Through the eyes of non-participants, the strike looked quite different. For Henry, whose “temporary” status at the time of the strike left him at extreme risk of mid-year dismissal if he had chosen to participate, relationships with select colleagues remain somewhat strained.

“It ruffled some feathers [that I didn’t strike] and for horrible reasons. I don’t think [other teachers] had any reason whatsoever to be upset with me. But they were... I used to sit with colleagues in the teachers lounge during lunch and after the strike, I would sit down and not only would no one talk to me, but a few times they would get up and move to another table... I didn’t want to be that guy who returned a cold shoulder with a cold shoulder so I still made a point to say ‘hi’ [to one colleague in particular] whenever I passed her. And she would never respond. And then finally, she turned around one day and just let me have it. She said, basically, ‘Stop it! You’re a horrible person. You’re no friend of education!’ And since then the relationships [that I have] with those colleagues have improved but there’s never been a time when they’ve acknowledged that what they did was petty. It would have meant a lot to me [if they had]. It still would. I’m cool with them, I forgive, but it’s always in the back of my mind.”
The relationship might not be one of causation, but Henry made a point later in his interview that he is “not really close to many teachers” on his campus. While the obligation of holding tri-weekly lunchtime study hall for his athletes who are struggling academically, and the “mind-boggling amount of time” he dedicates to his student-athletes detracts from his ability to be “buddy-buddy” with his fellow teachers, the fact remains that for whatever reason or combination of reasons, Henry does not feel significantly connected to his teaching community.

Peter, one of three self-identified non-union members, commented casually about the reaction he received in response to his non-participation in the strike. While noting that his decision was not received well by the campus at large, he qualified that general statement by noting that:

“Some of the people came to me [privately] and said, ‘I really respect what you’re doing and I get it. I would like to join you it’s just…” Peter continued, “If you’re say, a math teacher and your whole department is striking, you’re most likely going to join in. And that’s what some did. With others, there was for a good number of months some bitterness because here I was, every day, going to work, crossing the line, and they’re out on strike.”

But regardless of reaction and its implications, Peter sticks by his decision not to participate in the strike. A transplant from the business world, Peter’s confidence in and ownership of his unconventional approach to union membership and persistent pursuit of answers to difficult questions makes him the “face of” what appears to be an under-current of disgruntled member and non-member sentiment that transcends generational lines.

Throughout each interview, USD teachers were much more animated and appeared much more interested in discussing the work of EU, than the work of the CTA. Teachers, as educators, union members, and individuals, are most directly impacted by personal relationships and day-to-day experiences. The point at which and the extent to which union membership matters to these individuals is naturally more significant where and when the union enters the personal lives of teachers. Therefore, it is at the local union that “the union” is most felt and most seen. In respect to the CTA, respondents overwhelmingly communicated a lack of substantial understanding and a lack of involvement with state union matters, except in the few instances in which the CTA entered the local community and lives of local teachers.
CTA’s Local Impact -

While there certainly is not one collective opinion on the work or influence of CTA, locally and statewide, for most, individual identification with CTA membership appears distant and personal benefit, difficult to interpret. Hesitant to make conclusive remarks about the work of the CTA, most members qualified their state-directed union frustration with an acknowledgment of their limited sense of the work that has and that is being done on their behalf at the state level. For many teachers, contact with the CTA does not extend beyond interactions with campus representatives and the semi-regular receipt of CTA-generated brochures. In essence, the CTA is an allusive body to most of its constituents. It was only during the district-wide strike that local members felt the CTA’s presence, and found it largely unimpressive.

CTA and the Strike-

The CTA did send some level of support to USD during the strike, but those participants who commented on the CTA’s impact and support at the local level felt it was primarily negative and/or poorly managed. “They made an ‘appearance’ for a photo opportunity when we went on strike,” said one senior survey respondent, who, while not actively involved in the local union, identifies with union values. For a local teaching community that largely saw itself as setting a precedent for union-district relationships amidst financial hardship, a precedent believed to be for the benefit of teachers and unions throughout California, the state union’s support was underwhelming. At the district and campus level, CTA representatives provided consultation and recommendation for strikers’ conduct. But according to Charlie,

“When the CTA came it was like they wanted to run the show. They said that we should basically be bullying people who were crossing the line, that we should be giving them a hard time and making it really tough on them. And that’s not the kind of staff we are here. Who [were they] coming out of no where telling us how to treat our family?... I’m not a big fan of the CTA and I think that’s common for a lot of teachers. They take a lot of our money and don’t seem to represent our interests... When they came down to help, it didn’t feel like they were helping. And then when we hit our financial needs and said, okay CTA, can you help us? It was like ‘no, you’re on your own here’... Okay so then what do we give you all this money for?”

The frustration that Charlie voiced regarding the CTA’s lack of meaningful support was echoed and reinforced by the words and actions of junior teacher Mark. According to Mark, the financial
losses endured by striking teachers, especially those with spouses who were also district educators, were significant. The CTA contributed a “relief fund” for all teachers who went out on strike that totaled $500, an amount that Mark considers “a slap in the face that, if divided amongst all teachers who went out on strike would equate to cents” per teacher. Flabbergasted and insulted by the amount of support the CTA offered its members, Mark directed his upset toward Sacramento. Below is letter he personally wrote to David Sanchez, the President of the CTA:

“Mr Sanchez:

I am writing you as a teacher in [USD.] I find it egregious that the NEA/CTA contribution to our strike relief fund was $500. It is not about the money—it is about the principle. I have highlighted your mission statement goals to make it clear to you that you have failed your members. As I do with my students, here is an analogy to make my point more clear: let’s pretend you were FEMA and we were the victims of a natural disaster. You sent us the equivalent of two bottles of water, a blanket, and a tent. I am not writing to request more money for our teachers who stuck out their necks for the benefit of our profession. I am not writing to you to complain about your lackluster rally and apathy to our dire situations. I am not writing to you to speak on behalf of my fellow teachers (some who were losing close to $1000 a day with both spouses on strike.) I am not writing to you to make you feel inferior to our neighboring unions [two of which donated $7,500 and $10,000 each]. I am writing to you to simply say—you have failed your members.”

Mark complemented Mr. Sanchez’s team in generating a timely response. A member of Mr. Sanchez’s staff replied to Mark and reported that the whole strike cost the CTA about $30,000. While Mark admitted that he was not aware the CTA contributed that amount to the local union’s effort and that the representative had a very logical breakdown of expenses, he just could not and can not shake his frustration. Clearly searching for the right words to articulate a nagging feeling, Mark sighed, “Five hundred dollars. I mean, I could have donated five hundred. Yes, it would have been out of my pocket, but I could have done it. It’s just… the principle.”

CTA and Local Politics:

The feelings expressed by Charlie and Mark toward the CTA’s assistance with the local strike, namely a lack of unification of the interests and priorities of the local union and the CTA,
reverberated throughout survey and interview responses. While the CTA is dependent upon local level membership and, some would say, local level teachers benefit from the CTA, the sense of service and identification with the work of CTA at the state level appears low within USD and across levels of EU membership.

The CTA, which spent more than $35 million, generated by local-level teachers’ dues, on funding ballot measures and propositions in the November 2012 election, is a political force in Sacramento. For political purposes, the CTA often utilizes the label “supported by teachers,” a message that at least some teachers within USD believe has had a negative impact on the local union and has worked against the interest of local teachers.

“I know from personal experience that the CTA’s stance on ballot initiatives has hurt [our local union’s] credibility. We have no local credibility because [of the CTA.]” said Jim.

USD serves a community with many socially conservative constituents, for which the CTA’s public support of non-education issues such as Proposition 8 in 2008 was repeatedly noted in open-ended survey responses as a contributor to the local level teacher and union struggle to elect school board members whom they endorse.

“The CTA should stay out of issues not directly related to education. While I voted against Prop. 8, our union should not have been involved in that issue and others like it.”

- senior teacher, very involved local union member

Ralph, who along with a group of local teachers, parents and community members organized independently of the union to raise awareness of issues going on between teachers and district board members and ultimately, to recall select board members, points to a lack of understanding on the end of local-level teachers who do not support the CTA.

“A lot of these people say, ‘Oh, I’m anti-union, I’m anti-union.’ But, you know what? You’re an idiot if you think your paycheck would be what it is without it… [These teachers] don’t really understand what the union is doing for us. We’re under attack every day, every day in Sacramento. That’s our last bastion. And that’s what we felt in the [November 2012] election. And man, if we lost that clout... things would have really changed.”

An anonymous survey respondent highlighted an important point. While some teachers believe that the work of the CTA at the state level has a negative trickle-down effect on the local union
and local teachers, the CTA was also the greatest proponent of *Proposition 30*, which, arguably, prevented another year of budget cuts and RIF notices at the local level. She said,

“*Proposition 30 passed this year, which was important to us, and I doubt it would have passed without the endorsement of and publicity from the CTA.*”

-11-15 years teaching, uninvolved union member, few feelings regarding the union

Despite upset over the use of union dues for non-education related political purposes, survey respondents primarily voted in support of *Proposition 30* and in opposition to *Proposition 32* in the November 2012 election. The survey found that 81% of respondents voted for *Proposition 30* and 74% of respondents voted against *Proposition 32*. In other words, in the most recent election, the vast majority of sample teachers supported the CTA’s stance, and, implicitly, the allocation of their dues for the support of those initiatives at the state level.

**CTA and Member Representation**

In contrast to these self-reported statistics and the perspective of Ralph and teachers like him who personally identify with the work of the CTA and the CTA’s values, not all teachers believe that they are usually being represented well at the state level.

In his survey, Jim, who has taught for nearly the same number of years in USD as Ralph has, said this:

“I completely disagree with the use of union dues at the state level. I am usually on the opposite side of any position CTA takes on most propositions, and I resent that my forced contributions support an inherently political organization.”

It appears that personal values, rather than years of teaching experience, primarily impact an individual’s feelings regarding their representation at the state level. Henry, who identifies as being Conservative, prepared for his interview by investigating the CTA’s website. Henry noted that the CTA has an opinion on “anything and everything.” Inclusive of immigration reform to environmental issues to opposition to social security cuts, Henry finished his search wondering:

“Is there a set of criteria that guides the union with what kind of issues they get involved in? If there were it would seem to me that it would be so porous as to be vacuous.

Looking at what [the CTA] is involved in, can we call it the California Teachers Association? Why not teachers who vote Democrat? What makes it a teachers union?”

Henry continued, “I think that the union can make the case for all of the issues [they’ve
voiced a stance on] but whatever justification they use could probably be used to justify anything. It begins to look like the arm of one political party.”

Anonymous survey respondents fell across the spectrum of CTA support, with some respondents noting that they are “fully pleased” with their representation at the state level, and others reporting that they have “no opinion” on the work of the CTA. Regardless of personal perspective on individual representation in the CTA, the point of conversation and the point of frustration, for many, is consistently rooted in the portion of locally generated dues that are sent to the state level.

CTA, Show me my Money-

Whether the issue be the type of causes funded by members’ dues or the perceptively frivolous spending of a teacher-generated CTA budget, nearly all teachers expressed frustration with the size and spending of their compulsory contributions to the CTA. For some that irritation is rooted in transparent expenditures, others unknown allocation, and for others still, general waste. Each month, more than $100 is automatically deducted from each USD teacher’s paycheck. While a small portion of teachers receive a partial refund due to alternative membership statuses, dues are detracted automatically regardless of membership type, and are not scaled in proportion to teacher salary or reduced to accommodate budget and salary cuts.

Mark has insight into the CTA’s state operations, insight that has not left him any bit more pleased with union’s lack-of-support for local teachers during the strike:

“*My brother works in Sacramento and he tells me how CTA wastes left and right… They’re pissing away our money... the CTA is notorious for spending money on shit they don’t need.*”

According to Mark, waste ranges to “throwing money” at issues and propositions with no hope of the issue being successful to basic office and administrative expenses, such as opting for the brand name coffee, custom stationary, etc.

A senior survey respondent generalizes this issue to all large organizations, of which the CTA is one example. In regards to the use of her dues at the state level, she asserted:

“I try not focus on this issue because it usually upsets me. There is huge waste and inefficiency in every large organization. Any time the locus of control is removed from the active participants (classroom teachers), then decision-making and resulting
decisions are compromised, becoming much less than what they could be. I focus on what I can control: my classroom and my students.”

On a personal level, another senior teacher and active union participant struggles with the public perception of her, as a teacher, as a result of the CTA’s publicized perspective.

“I don’t always feel that the union represents my voice, and I hate that the perception of the union is that we’re all a bunch of greedy money-grubbers. They represent all of us, but they don’t really ask for our opinions.”

Within the discourse of teachers themselves appear inconsistencies in level of identification with and ownership of the union. While all members contribute financially to the union, “they,” the elusive “union” the survey participant above refers to, appear to be cognitively separated from the individual union member. So then, what and who is the union? Is it us? Or is it them?

Collective Action- Us or Them?

Within all of this discontent, even amidst an average satisfaction ranking with the local union at a 6.35 out of 10, most study participants did not appear mobilized or ready to mobilize to initiate change. In terms of quality of union leadership, and the issue of the state union being a self-selected group of “union-people” or a truly representative body of all union members, interview participants noted the following:

According to Jim, a former site representative who has had ample exposure to union leaders,

“The type of person who becomes a [local] representative to the CTA is someone who is very much going to represent the dominant union opinion. Generally those who do not to have the same opinions choose not to get involved.”

Even Mark, who speaks candidly about both his personal frustrations with and overall appreciation for a teacher’s union, admits,

“In all of my complaining, I just wouldn’t want to [be a union leader]. So I’m pretty much a hypocrite and an asshole.”

It appears that whatever tangible benefits come along with serving as a union representative are not inherently attractive enough to make the positions highly competitive or desirable. Or maybe, most teachers enter the teaching profession without much interest in politics or unions. It’s something that is expected to just, “take care of itself.”
Union Membership & Individual Identity

According to Peter, who spends some of his own time each year analyzing the financial statements of both the state and local union,

“Most high school teachers are not only passionate about what goes on in their classroom, they usually have one more outside interest. And then they have a family and a life beyond that. The whole union thing is not one of those burdens they want to pick up and carry. You’re not going to convince a sports coach to get overly involved in the union one way or the other. You’re not going to convince the new mom who’s teaching full time and has a kid at home that she should take on an extra workload.”

For a series of consecutive years, Peter has presented the CTA and EU’s financial statements in a PowerPoint presentation to those members of his campus community who voluntarily decide to attend. He made note of the high number of teachers who, after teaching for more than 20 years and paying dues for more than 20 years, had never looked into where their money has been spent. According to Peter, to these teachers, union dues are just “part of being a teacher… [they] don’t count on them and [they] don’t miss them.” Peter’s comments ring true in the survey responses and the majority of interviews included in this study. For most teachers, active personal interest in the union is low, regardless of financial contribution.

A senior survey respondent, who is not involved and noted that the union does not align with his values, is one of the union members Peter speaks of. This member has been paying full union dues without any level of union participation for more than 20 years. To him, non-membership does not feel like a real option. He explained:

“I only joined the union because they are legally allowed to take my dues whether I want to join or not.”

This member’s lackluster response is not unique. Numerous survey respondents noted that they plainly “have no idea” where their union dues are spent and that they have “no opinion” on union activities, locally, or at the state level. These comments are reinforced by the fact that only 11.6% of all survey respondents reported that they are “very involved” in the union, either holding a leadership position or attending union meetings and activities regularly. Less than 3% of all participants hold leadership positions in the local or state-level union. And within these surveyed high schools, countless teachers invest their time as enthusiastic sports coaches,
impassioned club advisors, and dedicated teachers, while the union gets very little energy and involvement from members. For most teachers, union involvement is not a personal priority.

**Analysis- Intersection of Theory & Findings**

Throughout the course of this study, the guiding tenants and theories described by Manur Olson and Tina Maragou Hoveka were very apparent—Olson’s assertions regarding collective action of groups and Hoveka’s beliefs surrounding motives for union membership were alluded to in the stories, experiences, and feelings of ground-level union members. In sum, these theories contribute to a partial and evolving understanding of the motives behind and satisfaction with union membership.

Generally low overall participation rates in union-related activities at the campus, district and state level speak, in a qualified manner, to Olson’s assertion that collective gain alone is insufficient to motivate collective action. While every teacher interviewed, regardless of political affiliation or personal opinion on the union, believes that teachers should have the right and ability to collectively bargain at the local level, the arm that facilitates such negotiations is the union itself. Reviews of this body are very mixed and most teachers do not actively contribute to the body that makes possible the collective bargaining process and provides collective bargaining benefits. To that end, Olson’s claim that large groups, such as teachers unions, which are rooted in collective action ideology, are often filled with free riders and disengaged members, is evident within USD. While this disengagement may be attributable to disagreement with the other forms (namely, political) of collective action engaged in by the union, or non-union related collective benefits that teachers contribute to (campus leadership, coaching), for those members who are actively involved in the union and contribute either directly or indirectly to its efforts, the issue of low-participation and teacher apathy is “frustrating.” Ralph, who led an initiative to raise awareness about the district’s negative impact on education and local teachers, said about the difficulty in rallying support for the collective cause,

“It was frustrating. It was frustrating for me. I put the screws down I have really good friends in my department but even then, it took awhile. It was hard to get certain personalities out there... They all thought everything would come around and work out.”

Ralph’s mobilization, which was intentionally done outside of the union to avoid the general community’s and, to some extent, the teaching community’s mixed feelings regarding “union
politics,” still consisted of a small group of teachers working to amend a harm that each interviewee spoke to: a deceitful and destructive dominant power on the local school board.

For USD, the motive behind union membership predominately is: why not? In a closed-shop state, some level of contribution to a collective bargaining union is a requirement. In the words of one member, “there’s absolutely no benefit to not joining the union, you pay for it, so you might as well get whatever protection and benefits they provide.” This statement, and others like it, are juxtaposed to comments regarding the work of the union directed toward the betterment of education and for the benefit of students. Interviewees seemed overwhelmingly concerned with the future of education in California but also referred back to the personal benefits (or lack-there-of) they are receiving from state and local union membership. This tension, attributed by Cooper and Sureau to the feelings of the general public toward teachers unions, was very well represented in responses from the teacher/union community surveyed. In describing the relationship between her identity and union politics, one senior teacher and very involved union member said,

“I do not always agree with the union stance. I am often torn between my life as a teacher and my life as a tax-paying, home-owning, semi-conservative parent.”

Hoveka describes this long-standing conflict between self-interest and benevolence but believes self-interest is and always has been the core motivation for teacher association and union membership. While Olson speaks to groups more generally and Hoveka examines teachers unions specifically, both authors echo the same sentiment: realistically, collective gain is not and has never been sufficient motivation for union membership.

All teachers, including those working within USD, are not just public servants; they are people, with the same financial needs as any member of private industry. While Hess and Kelly stressed that “teachers unions exist neither to defend children nor to plunder the public treasury… they are committed entities created to serve the needs of members” (54), in the case of USD, its local union and local and state-oriented political interests, the union appears to be committed to both the needs and the wants of at least some members. The fact that nearly 80% of all respondents denoted salary and benefits negotiations a top priority reveals that the financial needs of members are a primary function of the union. But, from interviews and surveys responses, it becomes clear that the majority of participants do not believe that collective bargaining/salaries and benefits should be the only purpose of the local union or the CTA.
interpret Hoveka’s definition of the “needs of members” more generally seems necessary in the case of USD.

Amidst the frustration, ambivalence and passion voiced throughout survey and interview responses from USD teacher, those other “needs” do not appear to be collectively agreed upon or shared by teachers at the campus, district, or state level. Each teacher, as does each member of the general public, has a different set of values and a different set of life experiences that intersect to create a unique opinion. And as the “union” grows larger, first from the campus, then to the district, then to state, and finally, to the national level, the distinctive opinions of each union member becomes a smaller numerical proportion of the union as a whole. At the district level, the EU represents thousands of teachers and thousands of opinions, at the state level, that number jumps above 325,000. And with each successive “jump,” members seem to understand and identify less and less the work being done on their behalf by the union.

Previously existing literature and theories on unionization speak to the general trends present within local level sentiments regarding the CTA, at the state and local level. But where this body of knowledge falls short is in its generalized conclusions regarding motivation for joining and participating in unions. While this study did not determine that any one of the aforementioned authors was wrong is his/her theories related to teachers unions, the study did determine that not one of these authors fully captures the entire truth behind union membership. Trends and theories do not tell a complete story and do not account for varying political and economic environments that are present, at different times, at the national, state, and local levels. But then again, neither does this study. In only 137 surveys and seven interviews, the diversity of opinion and experience of union member was considerable. To examine the magnitude of diversity that this study discovered at the local level to the scale of union membership at the state and national level would present an immense and arguably, impossible, challenge to researchers.

Discussion

Limitations

Considering the current social, political and environmental factors active within the state of California, and the very recent passage of Proposition 30, this study contributes a timely, and previously underrepresented voice in the ongoing conversation regarding the California Teachers Association, the voice of ground-level educators. But inherent to the exploratory nature of this
research and the time constraints under which the study was conducted, this body of research has significant limitations.

At the quantitative level, the district-wide survey was completed by 31% of survey recipients. This means that 69% of contacted individuals and district high school teachers were not represented in the study’s findings. This type of non-response bias in typical in survey generation, but results in inadequate coverage of the target population (Shutt 233). Furthermore, as only high schools within one school district were included in this study, the sample size represents a very small portion of 325,000+ CTA members.

The majority of this study and resulting analysis is rooted in seven in-depth interviews, which, although qualitatively rich, reveal within themselves the importance of individuality of each teacher in response type. Thus, while the study found that a unique combination of factors help each member form his/her opinion on the union, only seven of those stories and opinions were explored at substantial depth. Therefore, these findings and these stories should not be attributed to all district teachers or all union members statewide. Interview participants, selected after being identified as representatives of general values and experiences shared by a larger cohort of survey responses, volunteered themselves for interview participation—presenting another point of bias and another limitation to the generalizability of this study’s findings.

Future Research-

This exploratory study offers a small amount of insight into the opinions of the many local-level teachers represented by the CTA. In doing so, this research certainly indicates that there is a socio-legal and political need for further exploration of the experiences and values that all teachers: union participants, non-participants, passive-members, active members, and union representatives, associate with their membership and the work being done on their behalf at the state level. Education functions at intersecting circles of law, making the study of the implications of this reality immensely important.

Further research should begin at the local level—it should actively pursue input and insight from CTA teachers serving a range of communities throughout California. With the gamut of opinions that have recently been published by journalists and CTA representatives stressing strong anti-union and pro-union sentiment, it is important that the California public has an accurate portrayal of CTA teachers as individual components of a much larger organization.
An independent researcher or team of researchers who will not be obviously biased by their affiliation with a pro or anti-union group should capture this voice.

Additional research efforts should be directed at the exploration of recurring union member concerns and issues. For instance, answers to questions like: Where do my dues really go? Can my local union function without affiliation with the CTA? Are there other options for members who do not agree with political spending at the state level? Answers to questions such as these will be beneficial not only for union members but for the general public’s overall perception of the California teaching community.

**Conclusion**

In pursuit of uncovering distinguishable generational divides between junior and senior teachers, this study has generated a rich set of data from which qualified conclusions can confidently be made. Sentiments regarding and value attached to CTA membership are as various as they are numerous. While there certainly are passionate members both for and against state and local union efforts, for most teachers, regardless of generation, union membership is just “part of being a teacher” and it doesn’t hold much weight in their individual lives. Union membership is felt by teachers most at the local level—where membership intersects with other aspects of teachers’ identities. And in terms of importance, the union community does not compete with the value union members place upon their school communities, their neighborhood communities, their families, their religious communities or any of the many other communities from which they draw their sense of self and to which they devote their time. Consequently, the CTA becomes more of an affiliation that a substantial “membership” for California teachers.

While some teachers identify with the work of the CTA and their local union on numerous levels, all teachers agree that educators should have collective bargaining power. As the union is, in the state of California, the exclusive body through which collective bargaining can occur, salary and benefits negotiations appear to be the “glue” that unites 325,000+ educators up and down California. This core element is the same type of utilitarian function that is foundational in all unions, professional or labor. Unions were created to protect the rights of workers and function fundamentally to serve that end, and the CTA is no exception. But collective bargaining is not the only function or goal of the CTA, nor is personal gain the only priority for teachers. Rather, collective bargaining rights and the financial, employment-based protections the rights afford, give the hundreds of thousands of CTA members, each who has a
different set of stories, a different set of values, and a different opinion on the overall work of the CTA, a common incentive for membership. The union, at the very least, allows every member to engage in the communities he/she values and which constitute his/her personal identity with comfort, knowing that the income and benefits necessary to maintain a quality life are being managed on his/her behalf. To that end, while the union does not usually greatly impact an individual’s sense of self, it affords each teacher the ability to freely teach, parent, coach, mentor, and ultimately, live out his/her identity with a relative sense of security.
Appendices:

Appendix A - Survey Results, All Respondents

Total Survey Responses (N=137)

- **CTA Membership**
  - 97.8% CTA Members
  - 2.2% Non-Members

- **Did you feel membership was an option?**
  - 55% Yes, I felt it was an option
  - 45% No, I did not feel it was an option

- **Union Involvement**
  - 42% Involved
  - 58% Not Involved
Happiness/Satisfaction with Local Union:

Mean = 6.35

Proposition 30, November 2012

69.4% Yes on Prop 30
14.2% No on Prop 30
14.2% Did not vote
2.2% Decline to State

Proposition 32, November 2012

16.4% Yes on Prop 32
62.7% No on Prop 32
5.2% Did not vote
15.7% Decline to State
Appendix B- Survey Results, Junior Respondents

Teaching 1-10 years (N=53)

- **CTA Membership- Junior Teachers**
  - 98% CTA Members
  - 2% Non-Members

- **Did you feel membership was an option?**
  - 42% Yes, I felt it was an option
  - 58% No, I did not feel it was an option

- **Union Involvement**
  - 33% Involved
  - 67% Not Involved
Junior Teachers- Happiness/Satisfaction with Local Union

Mean = 6.6

Junior Teachers- Issues Ranked of #1 or #2 Importance for Union Prioritization
Appendix C - Survey Results, Senior Respondents

Total Survey Responses (N=35)

- CTA Membership - Senior Teachers
  - 100% CTA Members
  - 0% Non-Members

- Did you feel membership was an option?
  - 69% Yes, I felt it was an option
  - 31% No, I did not feel it was an option

- Union Involvement
  - 54% Involved
  - 46% Not Involved
Senior Teachers- Happiness/Satisfaction with Local Union

Mean = 6.3

Senior Teachers- Issues Ranked of #1 or #2 Importance for Union Prioritization
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