



## “Challenging Teacher Upgrades” by S. Steuerwald

### Staff vs. Faculty

What’s more important in a school? The staff or the faculty? I don’t think any of us enjoy the comparison because there really is no comparison. Office work is essential. A clean campus is crucial. A quality lesson is needful. The only thing comparable to staff and faculty positions is that they are both missional in our goal of education. Many of us are “the support team” for teachers. Support teams are the first line of defense (they answer the phones!) and our last line of defense (they come behind and clean up!). What happens in between gets most of the attention and glory, but a school’s first impression and lasting reputation often hinge on the services of the staff – the support team. We all have jobs to do, but faculty members should take the time to say thank you to their office secretary or detention supervisor or janitor or food service worker or substitute. And, staff members need to appreciate the expertise and invested time outside the time clock of their faculty teammates. Bottom line: we need one another! Let’s make a goal in 2017 to creatively show we appreciate one another.

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How many of people, like me, dread the next software update or phone update or version on your favorite application? The learning curve for each new required software platform can be daunting when one’s plate is already piled high with mounds of “to do” items. No doubt an announcement about new software to learn or a new grading system to master in a week is similar to visiting three homes on Thanksgiving: the first plate yummy, the second plate slightly painful, and the third plate sickening. Technology upgrades rarely give you a first or second plate experience; they more often represent the third plate experience.

A few years back I took a technology class designed specifically for educators. I was challenged in that course to not consider technology as an “add-on” but rather as an “add-in” to my teaching plans. Easier said than done! My professor encouraged me to look at my course and redesign or throw out things I had been doing in classes for years. Immediately I stressed out! Why do I need to change that test? It’s worked this way for years! Why does that project need a face lift? I’ve never had a student fail it yet! Despite the distress I began to feel, I chose one class to redesign; and as I began to use newer and better tools and resources, I began to love the new look. My objectives hadn’t changed, and honestly, very little about my approach changed. But enough little things were newly implemented that the next time I taught the class, I found myself enjoying it more and the students participating better.

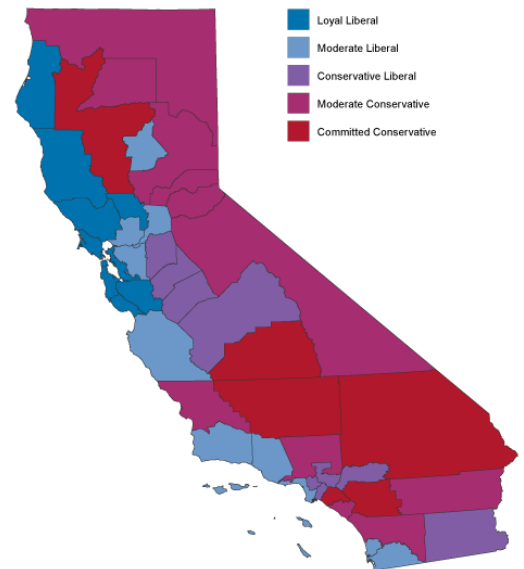
Little things are minor such as researching and finding a video lecture to bring

variety, developing flashcards through an app, changing the design and animation on my presentations, re-writing tests to make them better, giving lists of project ideas that gives students better options that fit their learning styles, allowing students to teach one another, developing a new drill game for review, and integrating technology into projects such as book reports, poster presentations, and bug collections.

Upgrades are difficult. They are time consuming. They are interruptions in our day. They sometimes come with technology bugs that need to be worked out for the upgrade to work properly. But...most of the time an upgrade or new version improves the product. Teachers need to be willing to evaluate their classes to determine which ones need an upgrade.

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### How Did We Vote?



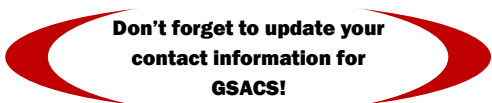
## 2016-2017 Calendar of Events



THE GOLDEN STATE  
ASSOCIATION OF CHRISTIAN  
SCHOOLS

49191 Cherokee Road  
Newberry Springs, CA 92365  
Phone: 760.257.3503  
Email: gsacs@ironwood.org

www.gsacs.net  
www.facebook.com/californiagsacs



January 12-13 or 19-20	Academic Testing Days
February 3	Deadline to register for Fine Arts Competition
February 7-8	National LEAD Conference
February 27	Deadline to drop/add for Fine Arts Competition
March 2-3	Fine Arts Competition, Santa Maria, CA
March 20-April 28	Window for IOWA Testing
April 4-6	National Fine Arts Competition, Greenville, SC
April 7	Northern Elementary Competition, Stockton, CA

Want to get involved? Contact us if you're interested in writing for *The Chalkboard*, helping with legislative alerts, or judging writing contests.

## Legislative Corner – Press Release Information from Pacific Justice Institute, Capitol Resource, and Save California.com

**Proposition 64:** Visit [savecalifornia.com](http://savecalifornia.com) to watch a video on how you can ban pot in your city despite the state's passing of prop 64 that legalizes marijuana.

**SB18 “A Bill of Rights for Children and Youth”:** Senator Pan introduced this bill on December 5, 2016. Here are the Bill of Rights he listed. Please visit Capitol Resource for more information on how to respond to this dangerous bill that is an assault on parental rights.

- (1) The right to parents, guardians, or caregivers who act in their best interest.
- (2) The right to form healthy attachments with adults responsible for their care and well-being.
- (3) The right to live in a safe and healthy environment.
- (4) The right to social and emotional well-being.
- (5) The right to opportunities to attain optimal cognitive, physical, and social development.
- (6) The right to appropriate, quality education and life skills leading to self-sufficiency in adulthood.
- (7) The right to appropriate, quality health care.

**Death Penalty Propositions:** “Prop. 62 eliminating the death penalty lost on a close vote (46.4% YES versus 53.6% NO). Prop. 66 streamlining the death penalty process, making it more likely to execute murderers, won on a closer vote (51% YES versus 49% NO).” –[savecalifornia.com](http://savecalifornia.com)