FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 31, 2015

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15,000 California Teachers Convene for Unprecedented Day of Learning

California Teachers Summit provides unique opportunity for teachers across the state to build strong networks, learn cutting-edge strategies and access proven resources

Pasadena, CA (July 31, 2015) — 15,000 California teachers came together on Friday at 33 locations across the state for a first-of-its-kind event led by teachers, for teachers. As California leads the way to implement new, more rigorous standards, Better Together: California Teachers Summit is a unique opportunity for teachers to share best practices and build a network of colleagues to support future collaboration.

At CSU Sacramento, Superintendent Tom Torlakson emphasized the importance of supporting our teachers. “This event gives teachers a chance to grow professionally by allowing them to share their ideas, ingenuity, passion, and to learn best practices,” Torlakson said. “It gives teachers additional tools they can use to teach the new California Standards in math and English language arts—standards aimed at helping students learn the skills they need to succeed in 21st century careers and college.”

Based on the EdCamp model of professional learning, the summit featured breakout sessions where teachers shared ideas and innovative strategies that are working in classrooms across the state. Teachers also heard Ed Talks by local teachers who offered funny, inspiring and poignant perspectives about their successes with implementation of the California Standards.

“This extraordinary day is the product of a shared vision to provide a forum for California teachers to connect and learn from one another,” said Ellen Moir, Founder and CEO of New Teacher Center (NTC). “There is nothing more powerful than teachers working together to create a better future for our students.”

New Teacher Center partnered with California State University (CSU), the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) and its member institutions to organize this unprecedented event. The free summit was co-sponsored by the California Department of Education and supported by grants to NTC, CSU Fullerton, and Loyola Marymount University from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the S.D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, and the Silver Giving Foundation.
“Collaboration is a cornerstone of continued growth and learning,” said Loren Blanchard, executive vice chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs for the California State University (CSU) Office of the Chancellor. “The CSU recognizes the value of providing professional development opportunities for CSU’s teacher graduates and for all teachers. Their continued advancement has a direct and positive impact on the lives and success of future students of the CSU.”

“Today is just a first step towards building a stronger network of teachers across the state,” said Kristen Soares, President of AICCU. “Through this collaboration, teachers are gaining invaluable lessons and tools they can take back to their classrooms, their schools and their communities.”

The program featured keynote addresses by Yvette Nicole Brown, an actress and teacher advocate, and Leland Melvin, an astronaut and STEM education pioneer, who each spoke about the potential of teachers to spark curiosity, creativity and a love of learning in their students. In a surprise video message, special guest Kid President offered an inspirational and humorous perspective on the important role of teachers.

The summit was designed to spark a conversation and build a community of teachers that will last far beyond the event itself. At each site, teachers received a packet with links to resources and concrete tools they can take back to the classroom to implement the new California Standards.

For more information, please visit [www.cateachersssummit.com](http://www.cateachersssummit.com), and follow #CATeachersSummit for up-to-date information.

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**About New Teacher Center**
New Teacher Center seeks to reduce the achievement gap in our nation’s schools by accelerating the effectiveness of new teachers through comprehensive mentoring and professional development programs. NTC partners with school districts, policymakers and leaders in education to implement programs that build leadership capacity, enhance working conditions, improve teacher retention and transform schools into vibrant learning communities. Founded in 1998, NTC headquarters are in Santa Cruz, California.

**About CSU**
The CSU is largest comprehensive university in the world, serving 460,000 students at 23 campuses. For more than 100 years, the university has been the vortex of teacher training, conferring the largest number of education degrees and multi-subject credentials to California’s teachers. The CSU is known as the “people’s university,” serving the most academically, ethnically and economically diverse students in the nation. The university is known for providing quality degree programs and preparing job-ready graduates for success. With 1 in 10 employees in California, and 1 in 20 Americans who hold a university degree in the United States as CSU alumnus, the university has the largest alumni base of any public university in the country with 3 million living alumni.

**About AICCU**
The Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU) represents 75 private nonprofit colleges and universities in California who collectively enroll 320,000 students. The core mission of AICCU institutions is to improve lives through higher education. AICCU institutions are committed to the public good and are incredibly diverse—ranging from large to small traditional liberal
arts institutions, including nationally ranked research universities; colleges offering faith-based, performing and visual arts, and non-traditional programs of study; as well as professional schools that specialize in business, law, medicine, and more. Accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) is required for membership, as is fulfilling a public purpose through nonprofit status. In addition to providing creative and intellectual higher education resources to assure California’s future economic vitality, AICCU institutions are major contributors to the economies of the regions they serve—as large employers and consumers of local goods and services.