

may make school violence the expected norm.

This trend also shifts the responsibility for teaching children away from teachers to counselors and police. When the shootings first took place, there was some serious discussion about the size and culture of schools. All the shootings occurred in large schools where kids outside the mainstream could easily fall through the cracks. Teachers and administrators claimed ignorance of the threat from neo-Nazi gangs and antisocial cliques.

But now the discussion has shifted almost entirely toward militarization and regimentation of schools and side issues of student dress codes.

Calling on students to eat lunch with kids they don't normally eat with is a nice idea but it avoids many of the responsibilities that adults should bare, like school restructuring.

Over the next decade we will spend billions in the construction of new gigantic high schools and junior highs. This is a recipe for more Littletons.

If we are serious about safe schools, one of the first things we need to consider is the creation of smaller communities of teachers and learners where kids are known by the people charged with educating them.

CALIFORNIA'S AGRICULTURAL EXPORT STRENGTH AND IT'S SIGNIFICANCE

HON. WILLIAM M. THOMAS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Mr. THOMAS. Mr. Speaker, in spite of all the jobs produced by foreign trade in California and the opening of a new round of agricultural trade negotiations expected during the World Trade Organization Ministerial meeting this fall, there continue to be those who claim the U.S. should not undertake new negotiations. I believe what we need are more ways to sell overseas so California farmers can take advantage of their ability to produce quality products.

Exports are vital to California's agricultural industry as well as the California economy. California's agriculture accounts for almost \$7 billion in exports every year. Cotton and almonds, which account for one quarter of California's agricultural exports, are the two largest exports with 83 percent and 55 percent of the crops respectively being sold to foreign markets. We have also seen a booming increase in wine exports, which have grown 80% since 1995. Wine is now the third largest California agricultural export. One third of all California's agriculture output goes to foreign markets.

The three leading export markets for California are Japan, Mexico, and Hong Kong. Japan still offers the largest growth potential in value added products. Mexico is recovering from the effects of the peso devaluation and has resumed its position as the largest market for California's farm agricultural exports. Hong Kong plays a key role as the gateway to Asia for exports. Thanks to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), tariffs between two of California's major markets, Mexico and Canada, are being phased out or have already been eliminated. These markets are not the only ones in which growth is expected.

California has the real possibility of making inroads into new emerging markets with long term potential. Many Asian markets were largely closed to foreign trade until this decade. Latin American nations also have potential to become important long-term importers of California's agricultural products.

Another contributing factor to California's agricultural export strength is the motivation to adopt useful latest technology. Approximately 90,000 farms in California currently have Internet access and the number of farms "on line" has doubled from 23% to 46% in the last two years. Using this tool, farmers have access to commodity prices, weather, news on the latest technology, advice from the USDA and market conditions. This improved access to information will give farmers more control over production and marketing.

In fact, California agriculture has demonstrated remarkable flexibility in marketing its products during the last ten years. Anyone who shops for produce is familiar with the bagged, ready-to-eat salad and vegetable products packed for consumers. Storage techniques have improved to the point where many types of produce are available for months after harvest with the same quality we have come to expect from fresh-picked products. Having perfected these techniques at home, Californians are positioned to offer foreign buyers high quality goods as well.

While California has grown to be the biggest agricultural producer and exporter in the U.S., we should remember that our farmers also have the ability to offset unfair trade restrictions or obtain time to adjust to new market conditions. For example, American lamb producers recently obtained a 3-year recovery program to battle the recent drastic increase in lamb imports. This tariff-rate quota system will impose high tariffs on any lamb imports exceeding a specified amount. This will give our domestic lamb market the ability to recover competitiveness.

Agricultural exports from California continue to grow and support our economy by creating jobs, revenue, and increasing our own economic stability. By continuing trade with our current customers, as well as researching new and emerging markets, California's agricultural production and value will continue to grow. We know we can prosper through trade. What we need to do most is pursue new places and means of trading with other countries.

HONORING SAN DIEGO COUNTY'S 1999 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR

HON. RANDY "DUKE" CUNNINGHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 21, 1999

Mr. CUNNINGHAM. Mr. Speaker, as a strong advocate of excellence in education, I am honored today to give recognition to four men and women who have been named San Diego County Teachers of the Year.

These are: Alma Hills, O'Farrell Community School; Karen O'Connor, Sunset Hills Elementary School; Jan Patrick Mongoven, San Marcos High School; and Gualter do Rego Moura, Mission Bay High School.

Excellent education begins at home with strong families. It continues in the classroom, with teachers who do their jobs well, whose

lives are dedicated to the children and the young people that they enrich and inspire. As a former teacher and coach, I understand that teaching is a difficult job whose rewards are not always immediately evident. But nothing that is truly rewarding in life comes easily. And the dedication and commitment shown by San Diego County's finest teachers exemplifies the best of our schools, the best of our communities, and the best of America.

Because education is the passport to the American dream, I want for all of our Nation's young people to have the finest teachers. And while San Diego County has recognized these four for Teacher of the Year honors, eligible for further recognition at the State and national levels, the truth is that there are hundreds and thousands more outstanding teachers where these came from—in public and private schools, in public charter schools, and in home schools across our country. As we work to do better, we can learn from the best.

Let the permanent RECORD of the Congress of the United States note the contributions that San Diego County's 1999 Teachers of the Year have made to the lives of young people in our community, the high standards of professionalism that they exemplify, and their love of teaching and learning.

I commend to my colleagues two news articles describing San Diego County's Teachers of the Year. The first is from the San Diego Union-Tribune of September 19, 1999, and the second is from the Escondido (Calif.) North County Times, of the same date.

[From the San Diego Union Tribune, Sept. 19, 1999]

FOUR SALUTED AS TEACHERS OF THE YEAR (By Angélica Pence)

Four teachers were saluted last night with the San Diego County Teacher of the Year Award for the creative and dedicated ways in which they bring out their students' potential.

Those honored were Alma Hills of O'Farrell Community School, Karen O'Connor of Sunset Hills Elementary School, Jan Patrick Mongoven of San Marcos High School and Gualter do Rego Moura of Mission Bay High School.

This year's winners were announced at a Salute to Teachers ceremony that was broadcast live on Cox Communications Channel 4. The event was held at San Diego's Civic Theatre and co-sponsored by the county Office of Education.

Thirty-one educators throughout the county were nominated by their peers and school districts. Given its size, the county submits four candidates for consideration for the state honor. The award is the first stepping-stone to state and national Teacher of the Year awards.

Candidates are selected on the basis of student achievement, professional development, community involvement and accountability. A nominee's teaching philosophy, personal style, knowledge of educational issues and trends, and promotion and development of the teaching profession are also considered.

For this year's crew of favorites, tapping into each student's talents is a key to their success.

Hills, a language arts and social studies teacher of O'Farrell, has helped prepare hundreds of teen-agers for high school and beyond.

"I live and constantly work with the anticipation that children can grow up to be productive adults in our society," the seventh-grade teacher wrote in her contest application. "I am very anxious about my responsibility to children and society, and so I