

Union Notes – Jan. 5, 2021

Welcome Back!

Happy New Year! I hope everyone had a chance to rest and recharge over the holiday break. As the new year begins, the SDEA Bargaining Team and leadership will continue to prioritize health and safety in all discussions with SDUSD. We will also have conversations with our local and state elected leaders to make sure they understand that health and safety should be at the center of all decisions made around school reopening.

Governor's Announcement on Restarting In-Person Instruction

Over the break, Gov. Newsom announced plans to incentivize school districts to restart in-person instruction. We must take some time to go through the plan and get a clear understanding of what it actually says. We do, however, know that our state is in the midst of the worst spike of this pandemic. California's coronavirus case rate now far outpaces every other state, except Arizona. Hospital morgues in San Diego are near or at capacity. Ambulances are being turned away from hospitals. It doesn't make a lot of sense to "incentivize" the reopening of schools with predetermined timelines when our community spread is at such unprecedented levels.

Please note, even under Newsom's plan, San Diego County's case rates would preclude reopening at this time.

UCSD/SDUSD COVID Testing Program

Though COVID testing is not currently required, it is highly encouraged for all students and staff participating in Phase 1 onsite appointments to get tested on a regular basis. Testing sites reserved for SDUSD employees only have been closed, however employees may obtain COVID tests from multiple sites across the county. Those sites can be found at 211sandiego.org.

Right now free COVID-19 tests are available to students and staff participating in Phase 1 at one of 10 district elementary schools: Benchley, Dingeman, Foster, Gage, Hearst, Jerabek, Mason, Penn, Rolando Park, and Vista Grande. Students and staff must be participating in Phase 1 onsite appointments to be eligible to receive a COVID-19 test at their assigned school site. For instance, if a student or staff member is participating onsite during Phase 1 at Gage Elementary, the test must be administered at Gage Elementary.

Roll out of COVID Vaccines

There is no legal requirement at this time for school staff to be vaccinated to return to work on school campuses. We don't know if there will be such a legal requirement. The vaccine is slated to be made available to educators in Phase 1B, Tier One of California's vaccination schedule.

Currently, California is still in Phase 1A, which includes about 3 million people: <https://covid19.ca.gov/vaccines/>

COVID Leave

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act's (FFCRA), passed by Congress in March 2020, included important paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave benefits. However, these benefits have expired as of December 31, 2020. The 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) was recently signed into law; however, it does not provide the same level of leave benefits as the FFCRA. This law instead provides employer tax credits for paid sick leave--which is not particularly useful for public sector employers like SDUSD. We are studying the impacts of this new law and consulting with CTA. Stay tuned for future updates. In the interim, regular sick leave will need to be utilized for any COVID related leave.

E3 Evaluations

This week, members should be hearing from their principals about the E3 process for the 2020-2021 school year. Principals should be scheduling the initial meeting for all those who are on schedule to be evaluated this year.

As outlined in the [MOU](#), members on schedule to be evaluated this year have three options. You may participate in the Modified E3 process, which entails attending four trainings on the E3 goal writing process.

The second option for members is to participate in the Full E3 process, which entails going through the goal writing, observation, and coaching process with your administrator. This option would require an additional training and work with your administrator. The training timeline can be found [here](#). Members who participate in these two options will be held harmless and receive an effective evaluation for this year.

The third option is to participate in the Stull Alternative Evaluation. Members who choose this option will not receive the 'hold harmless' accommodation. The Alternative Evaluation timeline attached to our Evaluation MOU is in the process of being modified.

[Bargaining Teams Reach Agreement on UCSD Consultation, Educator Preparation and Planning Day, Phase Two Work Groups, and Future Phase Two Bargaining](#)

This agreement includes consulting with UCSD's health experts prior to beginning Phase Two of reopening. Also in Phase Two, one day per week will be reserved for an educator preparation and planning day. During this time, there will be a requirement of a 30-minute check-in with students and no more than 90 minutes of this day may be used for professional development and/or staff meetings.

Due to the complexity of Phase Two scheduling and formats, the Parties agreed to create two work groups: PreK-5th Grade and 6th-12 Grade, which both include Special Education representatives. These work groups, made up of seven representatives from each party, will be charged with designing and recommending schedules and the format of the workday during Phase Two. These recommendations will be brought forth to the bargaining teams no later than January 22nd. Future bargaining will consist of school nurse staffing, mixed rosters, health and safety conditions, accommodations and leaves, and elementary prep time.