

Union Notes – August 16, 2021

Returning to School During Delta

Many of us are concerned about the Delta variant and for good reason. Delta is more transmissible and is spreading quickly among younger non-vaccinated populations, especially in states without strict mitigations in place. The good news is that instead of fighting over mask mandates our state and district are listening to both the scientists and rank-and-file educators who want to be back in the classroom safely.

While our fight to win a prohibition on hybrid learning limits the possibility of physical distancing in the classroom, it's also true that the most important COVID mitigations are in place in our classrooms and that we can and will work together as union educators to demand improvements based on rapidly changing conditions and science. Together we are stronger and safer is more than a slogan, it's how we've kept each other safe and will continue to do so. The foundation we built last school year is strong and together we will build on it for the new school year.

Here's what's in place to keep students and educators safe:

- Vaccine availability for staff and eligible students
- The highest indoor air quality standards including upgraded filtration, air quality monitoring, and the use of highly effective portable HEPA systems
- Mask mandate for students and staff
- An improved testing program with expanded partners (beyond UCSD), deployment of both PCR and rapid antigen testing, rapid response teams, and more

Here's what we are working on now:

- Clear COVID communications (written and visual) provided by the District in multiple languages for families and staff
- Clear District policies on campus eating, singing, and wind instrument use
- Re-engaging with our team of expert scientists at UCSD

COVID Testing

The safety agreement ratified by SDEA membership requires that SDUSD must follow the health and safety guidance of the state. To that end, the District will follow the California Department of Public Health's direction to test staff that are unvaccinated. However, it is critical that vaccinated staff should have access to testing, in addition to students.

According to tentative details shared by the District, the services of UCSD will be retained to deploy testing teams to all comprehensive high schools once a week. UCSD testing teams will spend the entire day at the high school. The District is contracting with additional testing providers and labs to expand testing capacity and cover elementary schools and middle schools, in addition to deploying rapid response testing teams. Per the state guidance, unvaccinated staff are required to

be tested once a week. Vaccinated staff and students will be eligible to voluntarily participate in the District testing program as well. This program will be free of cost.

Superintendent Search Community Input Forums

The National Center on Education and the Economy will conduct town hall meetings that will inform the creation of a vision for the future of SDUSD, and the identification of the qualities of a Superintendent to lead the implementation of that vision. This week, five in-person meetings were held. The remaining meetings will be virtual. **There will be a forum specifically reserved for SDEA members and the Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee on August 19 from 10am to noon.** All virtual sessions will use the same, recurring login information to join a Zoom meeting; [link](#):

Meeting ID: 835 0396 1572 and **Passcode:** 757316

A list of all remaining sessions can be found **here**. Scroll all the way to the bottom of the page.

Teachers on State Council Vote to Oppose Governor Recall

Your ballot will arrive this week. CTA, our statewide union, has endorsed a **No** Vote on the recall of Governor Newsom. **Why?**

- The main contender that may win if the recall is successful has already come out against mandating masks.
- Governor Newsom championed a historic level of school funding.
- The recall effort is backed by corporate anti-union forces attacking public education and workers' rights.
- If the recall is successful, California will have a governor that is NOT elected by the majority of the people.

Anti-union millionaires are funneling millions into the recall campaign to weaken or eliminate laws that protect our pay, health care, retirement and safety on the job. The recall isn't just about Governor Newsom, it's an attack on our schools, jobs, wages, benefits, union and the students we serve.

Return your ballot: After you complete your mail-in ballot and seal it inside the secure return envelope, be sure to sign the outside.

To find out what you can do to support the NO on Recall efforts, check out the Labor Council **webpage**.

Explore Your National Board Certification Options--Informational Session on August 25, 2021

Good news! The Governor's education budget has put over \$25 million towards supporting National Board Certification and placing National Board certified teachers at high priority schools.

Now is the right time to earn your board certification if you are interested. The state budget allocated funds to pay your certification fee. Learn more at one of these National Board Information sessions that CTA is putting on along with the Stanford University National Board Resource Center.

Use this link to sign up for the zoom informational session. If you have questions about the session or need other information, please contact Alissa Fong at alissafong@stanford.edu.

CalSTRS Retirement Webinars

You're helping to build your students' futures, yet it's important to focus on your future as well. Whether you're just starting your career or are getting close to retirement, you can learn more about your career stage and your CalSTRS benefits **here**. You'll also discover available resources and the steps you can take now for your secure future.