

Union Notes – Oct. 23, 2020

District Communications on Future Phases

The District has sent principals and parents a slightly revised version of the draft presentation on reopening that they shared with our SDEA Bargaining Team. Future phases must be bargained before they are implemented.

The Superintendent also made a robocall to parents regarding increasing COVID case rates and possible dates for when the next phase of reopening may begin. We are also watching as COVID case rates are increasing and know that it is very possible that the county will move into the purple tier within the next two weeks, as the Superintendent appropriately acknowledged in her robocall.

As frontline educators we will make sure that the District continues to follow the science when making their plans for safe reopening.

SDEA Member Survey on Safe Reopening

If you haven't done so already, please remember to take the anonymous survey that was first shared on Monday. The deadline to complete this survey is Monday, October 26, 2020. If you've already completed this survey you should not take it again.

As your bargaining team prepares to begin negotiations over future reopening phases it is critically important they have input from SDEA members. Please take the time to complete this in-depth SDEA member survey on the safe reopening of schools: <https://forms.gle/iPFekWuX4trpGtvC8>.

Using the feedback gathered from this survey and input sessions that will take place in November, SDEA member leaders will develop the framework for our proposals to the District about future plans for safe reopening.

District Grading Policy

SDEA staff and leadership are studying the District's new policy around grading, but one thing is clear: there are many concerns around the potential for increased workload due to the new policy.

Under the Education Code, school districts are able to set the policies for how to grade; however, a teacher cannot be told what specific grade to give as long as they are following the overall policies. This means that the District can establish the rubric, grading system, and grading policies, but the teacher assigns the grade in line with those policies, based on the work completed, and the teacher's assessment of how the student did, within the

boundaries set by the District. However, we are able to address potential workload increases caused by the policy through our union contract.

Our contract has a process for engaging with the District, in order to find solutions, whenever there are District decisions that may increase member workload. The District has been notified that our union will need to engage in this process with them as it relates to the grading policy. We will work with the District to iron out issues that need to be clarified, and where there are fixes needed, we will call for those fixes.

Fall Excessing

There is a likelihood that based on retirements and how the excessing process plays out, your site might not lose any staff due to fall excessing. The District is notifying approximately 130 SDEA unit members that they are being excessed due to declining enrollment, but they only have about 23 vacancies in various credential areas that need to be filled. HR sent the following directions to site principals regarding how excessing will look different this year:

- We are only moving teachers to schools where the enrollment/ caseloads have increased, this means a majority of teachers in excess will not have to leave their schools. At this time, we only need to fill 23 positions.
 - While your allocation may reflect a loss, there are more people in excess than there are vacant positions- this means your staff will more than likely be able to stay at your site.
 - For this reason, you should wait to reorganize your schools/ change your master schedules until you receive verification that a teacher is leaving your site either through voluntary transfer or through retirement.

Those who are excessed will be able to choose from the 23 vacant positions. If you don't participate in this process, you will likely stay in your assignment. In the event the District does not get enough staff participating in the process to fill the 23 positions, the remaining positions will be filled by the least senior excessed staff according to their credentials. The remainder will stay at their current sites.

Special Education Excessing

We are also talking to the District about limiting the movement of SpEd staffing who would normally be excessed due to declining enrollment. The District's HR department is working to limit transfers of teachers to maintain continuity at sites and to accommodate possible caseload increases. This may require a side letter to allow for one-time changes for how SpEd assignments are handled during the 2020-21 school year. Stay tuned for further updates.

SDUSD Parent Petition on Science Based Safe School Reopening

Concerned SDUSD Parents have [started a petition](#) urging SDUSD leadership to fully reopen schools only when it is safe to do so, using clear science based criteria. The intent of this group is to demonstrate to policymakers that their call for a science based approach represents the voice of the majority of parents and educators, as indicated by the [results of recent polling](#) conducted by Hart Research.

Educators can support this science based approach to safely reopening schools by signing onto the petition here: <https://bit.ly/2HqfoVX>