

# THE ADVOCATE



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cover photo by Marc Capitelli/ above photo courtesy of the San Diego Labor Council

**Above: Big crowds turned out to ensure that Prop. S workers receive fair compensation (see story on page 5).**

**Cover: Cris Kirk (Bethune K-8), Glenn Yarwood (Crawford HS) and Krystal Dabne (Farb MS) discuss strategies for building a "workload model" to better suit student needs than our current "caseload/class size" model in Special Education (see story on page 8).**

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#### SDEA Mission Statement 2008-2009

The members of SDEA are dedicated to providing a quality public education. As a professional union advocating the interests of certificated staff, students and the community, SDEA/CTA/NEA will implement its membership commitment through involvement in politics, building coalitions, negotiations and grievance advocacy and educational programs.



## Letters in Solidarity

Camille Zombro  
SDEA President



Marc Capitelli  
SDEA Vice President

# Seven long months... And still no contract?

Dear SDEA Members—

It has been over seven months since our contract with SDUSD expired. To put that number into perspective, it is roughly the same amount of time that teachers get each year to prepare their students to take the CST. If we are expected to do our jobs in seven months, the District should do the same.

Despite countless hours of preparation, hours of bargaining sessions, and even an Unfair Labor Practice charge to light a fire under the District, we have little to show for all of the work being done by hundreds of SDEA members. It is long past time to take our message of "what it takes" to build a quality educational system out beyond our buildings and bargaining sessions!

All of us do extraordinary work, and time is certainly a precious commodity. Sometimes it does not take more time to help, but better use of time. Do you go to church, synagogue, mosque or other place of worship? When you are there you can speak for public education. Do you have expertise in your profession? There are new educators who would appreciate an ear that would really listen to them. Do you have a passion for bringing people together? Learn how to be a better organizer and help build your union. Have you ever visited your real boss?

Make a school board visit and speak to them about an issue you feel. You can speak at the beginning of the meeting (between 5:00 and 5:30 p.m.) and be out of there in 30 minutes.

This month's Advocate highlights the critical time we are all spending to improve conditions for SDEA members. There is a wrap-up of the Special Education Forums, where SDEA members who work with special needs students lent their time and expertise to the bargaining process. We highlight how Los Angeles teachers are protesting their own brand of "home grown" tests. Our labor allies educate us about the Proposition S "Project Stabilization Agreement" and what all the fuss is really about. And finally, we spend some time focusing on how bargaining is — or is not — moving forward.

Take some time to read about what is happening across SDEA and the labor movement. Knowing and understanding the issues that matter most is critical to our collective success. It is time to get organized, and it is time to get things moving!

**In Solidarity,**

*Camille Zombro*

Camille Zombro  
SDEA President

*Marc Capitelli*

Marc Capitelli  
SDEA Vice President

## SDEA President Camille Zombro Site Visit Log

Working directly with SDEA members and sites is the most important work of SDEA leadership. Each month we will include a list of the schools visited by SDEA President Camille Zombro. **To schedule a site visit, email Camille at zombro\_c@sdea.net.**

### January

- 8-Cubberly El.
- 12-Rodriguez El.
- 14-Bayview Terrace El.
- 15-King-Chavez
- 16-Green El.
- 20-Cubberly El.
- 21-Toler El.
- 22-Toler El.\*
- 22-Memorial Prep.
- 27-Mann MS
- 27-Perkins El.
- 27-VAPA Dept.
- 28-Angier El.
- 28-Taft MS
- 29-Perkins El.\*
- 29-Pershing MS
- 29-Mann MS
- 29-Loma Portal El.
- 30-Mann MS

### February

- 2-Sessions El.
- 3-Dana MS
- 3-Silver Gate El.
- 3-Chollas/Mead El.
- 4-Lindberg/Schweitzer El.
- 4-Marshall El.
- 5-Memorial Prep.
- 10-Sessions El.
- 12-Dingeman El.
- 17-Chollas/Mead El.\*
- 18-Franklin El.
- 19-Miramar Ranch El.
- 19-Montgomery MS
- 19-Zamorano
- 25-Psychologists

\* Indicates that the meeting occurred with a School Board Trustee present



# Bargaining Update: More delays from the District

SDEA's bargaining reports are beginning to seem like a broken record. For almost five months now, our Bargaining Team has come to the negotiations table with the expectation (and direct promise from the District) that SDUSD will finally step to the plate and bargain in good faith. But instead of responding to our proposals, or making or explaining proposals of their own, the District's efforts continue to focus on creating new ways to set back the process or rationalize further delays to substantive bargaining.

Sadly, the Jan. 15 negotiations session was more of the same. SDEA members were holding out hope that a new majority on the school board would finally get negotiations moving. While few of us believe Katherine Nakamura or John de Beck will suddenly reverse course and start advocating for San Diego educators, we had strong reason to believe that John Evans, Shelia Jackson and Richard Barrera would usher in a period of positive change in the District. To date, there is little sign that such a change is occurring, at least with respect to contract negotiations.

Enough is enough and even the California Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) recognizes that the District has violated its duty to bargain in good faith (see inset). Let us hope that this action by PERB will finally compel the District to come to the bargaining table prepared and willing to negotiate.

## Proposed Supplementary Early Retirement Plan

On Jan. 30, SDUSD finally provided a counter-proposal to our formal SERP proposal (which we gave the District on Nov. 12, 2008). The District's proposal (complete details can be found on the SDEA website: [www.sdea.net](http://www.sdea.net)) would take effect Spring 2009, and involve the District paying into an annuity account an amount equal to 100 percent of each eligible participant's 2008-09 salary.

SDEA negotiators were given only a week to analyze information provided by

## SDUSD Found to Have Violated State Labor Law

A ruling issued Jan. 29, 2009 by California's Public Employment Relations Board charges the San Diego Unified School District with violating the law by delaying collective bargaining and not playing fair at the bargaining table with the San Diego Education Association. The ruling completely validates the Unfair Labor Practice charge filed by SDEA in December 2008.

"This is a huge victory for SDEA members who are now in our 7th month without a contract," said SDEA President Camille Zombro. "The ruling is further evidence that the District has not been up front with SDEA's negotiators, and that their refusal to bargain cannot continue."

the District and craft a bargaining position on the counter-proposal. It should be noted that while the SERP will be popular with many SDEA members, it could result in tens of millions of dollars in savings to the District.

**The savings, in turn, could be directed toward salaries for remaining bargaining unit members, in recognition of the additional work and loss of expertise across the District which may result from a SERP. Bottom line: This could be a win/win for everyone.**

So far, the District has rejected SDEA's proposals that any savings from the SERP be applied to our salary schedules. This is despite the fact that in July 2007, the District and SDEA jointly recommended as part of the *SDEA-SDUSD Compensation Comparability Task Force* report that any savings from a SERP "be used to bring teacher 20-year earnings to the [county] median."

SDEA's position remains that a SERP needs to be constructed in such a way that it can be supported by *all* SDEA members.

## A Note of Thanks

SDEA's Bargaining Team would like to thank everyone who attended the special education bargaining forums at SDEA in January and early February (see this month's Advocate article on Special Education, page 8). The forums resulted in a wealth of critical information and data that will be used by the Bargaining Team to craft new contract language proposals to deal with burgeoning special education workloads.

**Also, thanks to the SDEA members below who devoted their time and talents as facilitators to make these forums a success:**

John Anella, Program Monitoring Dept.  
Diane Capitelli, Kumeyaay El.  
Marc Capitelli, Webster El., SDEA VP  
Claudia Dunaway, Speech and Hearing Dept.  
Connie Gearhart, Clark MS  
Bill Freeman, Porter El.  
Liz Gekakis, Lincoln HS  
Meghann Hughes, Kearny HS  
Jetonne Jordan, San Diego HS-School of Business  
Karen Pearce, SDEA-Retired  
Christine Thompson, Marshall MS  
Carol Wheeler, Pershing MS  
Shari Wood-Valenzuela, Franklin El.  
Karen Pearce, SDEA-Retired

# It's good to have friends

## SDEA strengthens labor alliances

## Prop. S work will be labor-friendly

by LORENA GONZALEZ  
CEO/Secretary-Treasurer,  
San Diego and Imperial  
Counties Labor Council

I was so proud of the School Board's new pro-worker majority last month when it authorized the School District to negotiate a Construction Careers Project Stabilization Agreement for the capital improvement projects that voters approved in November as Proposition S.

Agreements like these present tremendous potential for the San Diego Unified School District, just as they have delivered positive results time and time again for other districts around the state, like Los Angeles Unified and Sacramento City Unified. They can also set guarantees for the district and the taxpayers, so that contractors and their workers are made accountable, which helps prevent cost overruns and delays on the work. These agreements are the only way that the District can require contractors to hire local workers, pay their workers health care, and give priority to training programs that have demonstrated clear success in graduating apprentices who go on to make a career in the construction industry.

The Construction Careers Project Stabilization



photo courtesy of the San Diego Labor Council

**Unionized construction workers support the PSA because it calls for good wages and benefits for local workers, while encouraging apprenticeship programs that will benefit our students and communities in the long term.**

Agreement sets the working conditions for the construction and modernization projects that are funded with the Proposition S bond money. With the playing field set, all contractors can determine whether they want to bid on the work or not.

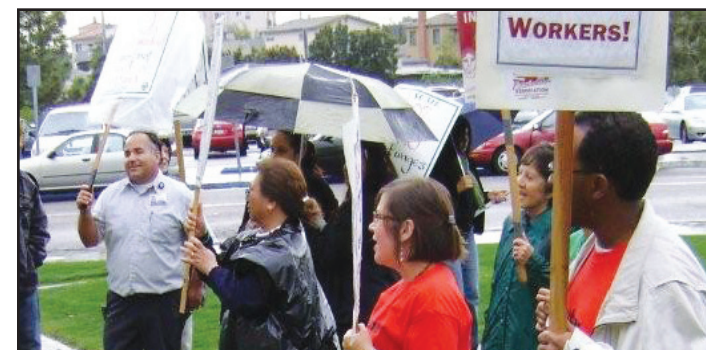
Unfortunately, there are a handful of anti-union contractors who want to turn back the clock on worker protections. They are setting out an all-out assault on this agreement in hopes that they can do business without all of the worker protections that need to be promoted in order to make construction a sustainable career for workers. These

contractors have threatened the School Board, but we are confident President Shelia Jackson and Trustees John Lee Evans and Richard Barrera will continue to forge a path of progress by sticking with their commitment to an agreement.

I want to thank Jackson, Evans and Barrera, as well as all of the educators who stood with us last month, for their support of careers in the San Diego construction industry. I know this project is going to make the parents, children, teachers and taxpayers of the San Diego Unified School District proud of the commitment they've made to improving our schools.

## SDEA turns out for UCSD dispute

Neither sleet nor snow (nor mild southern Californian rain) could keep SDEA from turning out to show solidarity at a recent labor rally at UCSD. Forging alliances with other unions garners support for SDEA issues. Support from other labor organizations proved crucial during SDEA's November election campaign.





# LA teachers facing similar woes

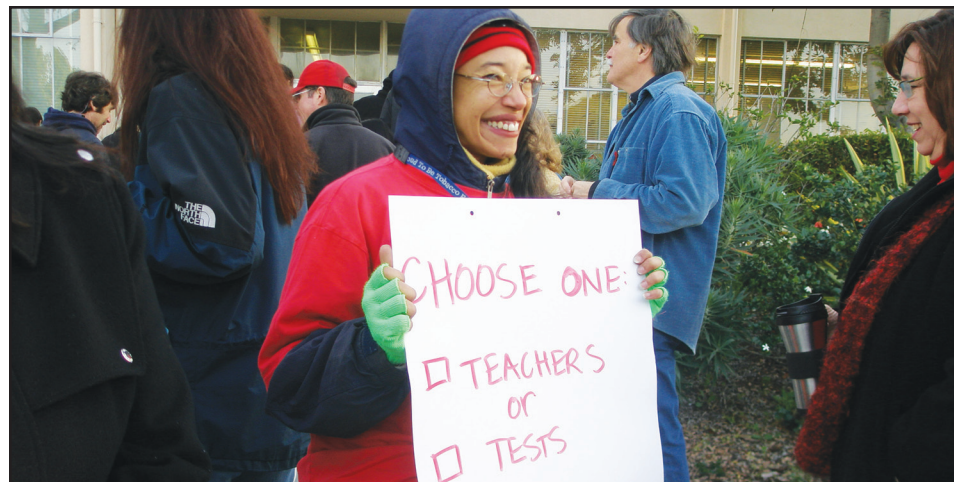


photo courtesy of UTLA

**Los Angeles teachers protested the increasing numbers of superfluous and redundant District-mandated tests at a recent rally. The periodic assessment boycott has been in effect since Jan. 27.**

Beginning Jan. 27, 2009, the United Teachers of Los Angeles called for a boycott of LAUSD's various "Periodic Assessments," which teachers are required to administer to students. These are similar to the benchmark assessments and other tests being given to students here in SDUSD. None of these "periodic assessment" tests are required under state

or federal law.

Similar to San Diego's "Data Director" and other data warehouse programs, UTLA members are also required to input scores from their periodic assessments into a central database. This means teachers are held accountable for material they never have time to teach, and the test scores are often of little use in driving decisions about

curriculum or individual student needs.

Like SDUSD, LAUSD has spent millions of dollars on outside consultants, programs, and materials for these tests--with little or no input from teachers. Like SDUSD, LAUSD administration never calculated how much instructional time is lost to all these tests. And like SDUSD, LAUSD administration is refusing to put the brakes on the testing and top-down curriculum that are wasting valuable instructional time and millions of dollars during tight financial times.

As of the writing of this article, UTLA turned out 15,000 members at their march on Jan. 29 to protest the budget cuts, layoffs, threats to healthcare, and unnecessary spending like the "periodic assessments." The District is threatening to write up teachers and sending their propaganda out to parents. But UTLA members remain committed to doing what's right for their students and for their profession.

To support our sisters and brothers in UTLA, write to LAUSD Superintendent Ramon Cortines and tell him that San Diego's educators support this important action being taken by UTLA members at [ramon.cortines@lausd.net](mailto:ramon.cortines@lausd.net).

# SDEA keeping the pressure on

If light is the best disinfectant to the political process, then SDEA is on the right track. Members have been coming out in force to recent board meetings, holding our representatives' feet to the fire and making sure that the decision-making process is transparent, fair, and in the best interest of students and teachers.

After working seven months without a contract, this is the time to keep the pressure on. Let's continue to show the board that **all of us** are on the same page with bargaining — and it is time for the District to join us.



photo by Larry Moreno

**A sea of red SDEA t-shirts greeted the Board at their December board meeting. Board members voted that day to rescind all remaining layoff notices from the previous year — a sure sign that together we ARE stronger!**

## CONTRACT FACT

# Meeting Attendance

## Know Your Rights!

by Morgan Thornberry

### How many meetings must I attend?

The union contract says that the balance of the 40 hour workweek includes attending "a reasonable number of meetings" (among other duties). But what's a reasonable number of meetings? A Memorandum of Understanding signed by SDUSD and SDEA representatives clarifies this murky language. It says that during a given month teachers may be required to attend:

- ✓ 1 staff meeting (including Staff Development)
- ✓ 1 departmental/grade level meeting
- ✓ Standing committee meetings (no more than one)

### DEFINITION

**"Balance of the 40 hour workweek"**

The weekly difference between the minimum on-site day of 6 hours and 35 minutes (excluding lunch) and the 8 hour workday.

### I go to Staff Development meetings three times a month! What gives?

#### WATCH OUT!

An additional meeting may be called to address issues that couldn't be included in a regularly scheduled meeting. The burden is on the supervisor to make the case to employees as to why the issues couldn't be included in a regularly scheduled meeting.

A Staff Development meeting that is held within the 6-hour 35-minute workday doesn't count as a meeting when you're calculating the number of staff meetings you're required to attend. If any part of the meeting occurs after the 6-hour 35-minute workday, it counts!

### What should we do if our union rights on meeting attendance are being violated?

Have a union meeting! Once all union members are on the same page, the AR and one or more members should meet with the supervisor to explain how union rights are being violated. If the meeting doesn't

resolve the problem, the next step is for the AR (or another member volunteer) to present the issue to the SDEA-SDUSD joint Contract Administration Committee (CAC). (Contact an SDEA Contract Specialist to put your site's issue on the CAC agenda.) If SDUSD and the supervisor don't resolve the issue through the CAC, then members can initiate the grievance process. The first step of the grievance process is an informal grievance meeting between the AR, one or more members, and the principal.

Sources: Collective Negotiations Contract, July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2008 (Section 8.5.3); Memorandum of Understanding (June 16, 2005).

SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

[www.sdea.net](http://www.sdea.net)

(619) 283-4411





# Special Circumstances

## Ask SDEA!

Tell us your concerns about changes in special education programs.



Pamela Coleman,  
1/2/3 Mild-Moderate PACE SDC  
Teacher,  
Chollas/Mead

Positive collaboration between Special Education and General Education creates a purposeful future for all our students, because our students are our future.



Julie Manning,  
4/5/6 Moderate to Severe SDC  
Teacher,  
Chollas/Mead

If we are to be successful with the inclusion/co-teaching model, the special ed. and general ed. teachers need to have access to curriculum materials, time to plan, and additional paraeducators so that truly 'no child is left behind.'



Geoff McCloud, PE  
Teacher, Silvergate

I'm not trained to handle full inclusion. Come and teach me how to work with these students and be effective.



photos by Marc Capitelli

**Top:** Karen Pearce (SDEA-Retired) facilitated a discussion with Guy DeVoss (Intern Program) and Kristin Meskell (Psychologist at Twain and Fletcher) regarding Special Educators' caseloads.

**Above:** David Tomchek (Scripps Ranch HS) and Cris Kirk (Bethune K-8) prioritize how they would spend their time if their workload accounted for students needs and teacher choice.

## MEMBERS SHARE CONTRACT CONCERNS ABOUT SPECIAL ED.

Last year SDEA held extensive membership discussions, as we conducted site and program Listening Sessions to lay the groundwork for bargaining. This month we finished a series of four forums with Special and General Educators to discuss our proposed "workload" model, and to address the impacts of co-teaching and inclusion. Members from across the District brought their ideas, looked to the future, and ultimately helped to craft proposals that could better serve our students and our members in these programs.

Members focused on the transition from the current caseload/class-size to a "workload" model. The difference between these two models is that rather than assigning a number of students per class or caseload, students and classes are assigned based on careful consideration of the work required to meet students' needs and to balance individual assignments.

The passion of SDEA members was worn on their shirtsleeves during these meetings and lit up our emails, as members who could not attend sent in their ideas. The fora revealed a number of common themes:

- There are no 40-hour work weeks. Our members routinely put in 50+ hours each week to do their jobs. One member brought five pages of documentation to a forum, demonstrating **10 weeks of additional time** she spent each year to do her job. All that time was accumulated after hours and on weekends.
- The district's new Special Education model is increasing workloads and decreasing time for students. More preparation is required, and members feel fragmented with so many demands on their time.
- A student is not a student is not a student... Our students are not the same. And neither are General or Special Education caseloads and class sizes. Even with identical numbers, the traditional model fails to account for the time needed to meet individual students' needs. We need a different model that accounts for these differences and that allows our students to succeed.
- The job is becoming undoable. Listen to one of our members: "Even additional adult help (the principal and parent volunteers) did not lessen the demands and stress. While I was extremely thorough in all my supports and documentation — I could not sustain that again this year. It simply took too much, and left me burned out."

If you attended or facilitated the for a, thank you! With a solid grounding of ideas, passion and common-sense proposals we have a good start as we continue negotiations. But it will take our continued efforts to transform the work of the forums into contract language and viable solutions. Bargaining for change means organizing for change, there is much more to do as bargaining continues.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### SPECIAL EDUCATOR SPEAKS: FOUR WAYS TO IMPROVE THE CONTRACT

Dear Editor—

I was, unfortunately, unable to attend either of the meetings scheduled to discuss Special Education due to a prior commitment. However, I do have some very definite ideas on what should be added to the contract in terms of Special Education.

1. Put into the contract that Special Education teachers must have a minimum of one aide. This year the District assigned aides to the Principal/school site rather than the classroom. While our Upper SDC (Special Day Class) teacher was on maternity leave I received a memo from our principal pulling both the Upper and Primary SDC aides without any notice and, according to the memo although not in fact, both aides were to be in our school's ILS classes indefinitely as the District had not yet hired aides for that classroom. I was having enough problems planning and organizing two classes without the removal of the aides. (I teach the Primary SDC class.) As much as I appreciate the ILS class being short staffed, it was a huge disruption for the other two classes. It was at that point that I discovered that there is **no language** in the contract about Special Day Class teachers having an aide.

2. More definite language about out of classroom duties needs to be included in the contract. The busses for Special Education students must be met daily and students must be escorted to the bus after school. Every Special Day Class teacher is, therefore, required to have duty a minimum of once a day for every single school day. This is completely inequitable when compared to General Education teachers having only a few weeks of recess/before/after school duty each year.

3. Special Education Day Class students mainstreamed for more than one hour should count towards a teacher's total classroom enrollment. For example, one of our Upper SDC class students is mainstreamed for two hours a day for English. He does not count on that teacher's role so she could, conceivably, be over her class limit with current practices.

4. There should be a maximum number of RSP students allowed to be assigned to any one teacher unless additional support, such as an aide, is also assigned. For example, our Upper SDC class sends four sixth grade students to a General Education science class at the same time. The classroom aide goes with them for support.

I would be thrilled if these issues could be included in contract negotiations.

— Anne Bremer, Primary, Non-Severe Special Day Class (Primary NS-SDC)  
Emerson campus of Emerson-Bandini Elementary



# SDEA, are you heart-healthy?

February is known for Valentine's Day, but did you know that it's also American Heart Month, as declared by Congress and the American Heart Association?

Cardiovascular disease, which includes congenital heart diseases, heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, arrhythmia, high cholesterol, peripheral artery disease and obesity, remains the number one cause of death in the United States, accounting for one out of every 2.8 deaths. According to 2008 data compiled by the American Heart Association, an estimated one in three American adults suffers from a cardiovascular disease.

Fortunately, despite these sobering statistics, taking a few key steps can go a long way toward preventing (or managing) cardiovascular disease. This month, start taking care of *your* heart.

■ **Eat a nutritious, balanced diet.** Yes, this means a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and some heart-healthy monounsaturated fats (such as avocados, olive oil and nuts), but you don't need to give up foods you love or make sudden, drastic changes. The key is moderation, and even a small change — such as swapping a chocolate bar for a generous handful of almonds and dried fruit, or including a serving of vegetables with every meal — can improve your health.

■ **Don't skimp on exercise.** Diet is only part of the equation; exercise is equally important. Regular aerobic activity (five days a week, 30 minutes each day) is recommended for cardiovascular health. Even if you're crunched for time, you can probably fit in 30 minutes total of brisk walking on weekdays: From your car to the office in the morning, taking stairs or walking to colleagues' desks during the day, a walk around the block at lunchtime, and the walk back to your car at the end of the day may be all you need. If you need more motivation to start exercising, check out the VEBA Strength Challenge (see box).

■ **Keep up with preventive care.** It's important to get your annual physical, even if you think everything is fine. That yearly appointment gives your doctor a chance to detect any problems before they become more serious (and costly) to treat. If you are covered by a medical plan offered by the Southern California Schools Voluntary Employees Benefits Association (the VEBA),

you have access to preventive care benefits, so make the most of them. In fact, if you are in a VEBA-sponsored PacifiCare medical plan, routine physical exams at an in-network doctor's office are free.

For more information on cardiovascular diseases, including symptoms, more prevention tips, and healthy living tools and resources, please visit the American Heart Association's web site at [www.americanheart.org](http://www.americanheart.org). You'll also find information and resources on maintaining your wellness at the VEBA's web site ([www.vebaonline.com](http://www.vebaonline.com)).

In addition to the resources listed above, you can also contact the VEBA Advocacy Programs to access programs that help you take control of your health, or to get help addressing a medical quality or access issue that you cannot resolve through your provider or health care plan. To contact the VEBA Advocacy Programs, call 619-278-0021, Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., except major holidays.

## Register now for the VEBA Strength Challenge!

The VEBA Strength Challenge, part of the Health and Fitness Challenge series, is open for registration from now through Feb. 16. This eight-week challenge begins on Feb. 23. It will introduce you to strength training (or assist you if you are already doing strength training). Strength training is important for proper muscle balance, injury prevention and rehabilitation, maintaining full functionality with aging, slowing down the aging process, increasing your metabolism, weight loss, and overall health, so do not miss out on this exciting way of taking charge of your health.

To register for or learn more about the Strength Challenge, please visit [www.vebaonline.com](http://www.vebaonline.com).



## SDEA congratulates new National Board Certified Teachers

SDEA congratulates the 14 SDUSD teachers who have achieved National Board Certification this year:

*Sarah Baros, Jones Elementary*  
*Lauren Beck, Serra High*  
*Erin Clark, San Diego Early/Middle College*  
*Jennifer Deaton, dePortola Middle*  
*Sarah Groves, Edison Elementary*  
*Jerry Hobbs, LCI Program*  
*Renea Jaeger, Mann Middle*  
*Yadira Llanes Torres, Golden Hill Elementary*  
*Deborah Manis, Euclid Elementary*  
*Katrina McClanahan, Field Elementary*  
*Corrin Parkey, Fay Elementary*

*Tina Rasori, Fay Elementary*  
*Florence Robins, Knox Elementary*  
*Wendy Robinson, Farb Middle*

In addition, two teachers have received their National Board re-certification for the next ten years:

*Vivian Miller, Crawford High*  
*Johanna Rodenberg, Parks Elementary*

These teachers join 140 other District teachers who have achieved National Board Certification, demonstrating that SDUSD teachers are exemplary professionals who deserve a contract acknowledging "what it takes" to do our jobs and do them well.

# Cuts hurt: Budget woes persist

Everyone knows that cuts hurt. A sample of proposed and actual cuts from around California includes:

- East Side Union High School District in San Jose is proposing eliminating all sports programs
- Long Beach Unified School District has implemented a hiring freeze.
- Palm Desert-based College of the Desert has eliminated winter intersession for 2009 and 2010 and summer 2009 classes.
- The state chancellor's office anticipates that over 260,000 students will be turned away from community colleges, making it more difficult for students to move on to a four-year institution.
- San Marcos has eliminated all bus routes. Oceanside no longer provides bus transportation to middle school students.
- The California Free and Reduced Priced Meal Program is nearly out of money after a 12% increase in meal demand in September and October of the current school year. The program

demand was up 4.5% last year over 2007.

- The Burlingame Elementary School District lost about \$1 million in investments in Lehman Brothers at a time when school enrollment is increasing.
- Class size reduction programs are at risk throughout the state.

The list goes on and on. I commend the San Diego Unified School District Board of Trustees for their commitment to making cuts far away from the classrooms and education programs staffed by teachers and education support professionals. Political and educational leadership is what is needed during these difficult times. A tip of the hat to Trustees Jackson, Evans and Barrera!

*Jim Groth may be contacted via email at [jgroth@cta.org](mailto:jgroth@cta.org).*



## Representative Assembly coming soon

Union election season is almost here. Have you wondered about those ballots that say "Vote for 24" and then there is another ballot with nearly the same names that says "Vote for 28"? Those elections are to select the members who represent you at the NEA Representative Assembly (RA). This is the NEA's annual meeting and it is the largest democratic assembly in the world with nearly 10,000 delegates. This year, it will be in San Diego for the very first time.

It is important that you vote. There are two similar ballots because some delegates are funded by CTA while others are funded by SDEA. CTA provides a better reimbursement of expenses so delegates like to be elected on the CTA ballot. Our problem is that all interested educators in the county are on that ballot and every CTA member in San Diego County can vote for those candidates. SDEA members do not understand this and do not bother to vote.

As a result, we are underrepresented at the NEA RA.

If you want to learn more about the NEA RA, please consider being a volunteer this year. We need 400 volunteers to staff the phones on the convention floor, work the information booth, escort delegates and help with many other jobs. The RA is always during the July 4 weekend so even year round teachers can share in the process, and learn more about the NEA and the RA. Volunteer forms can be picked up at SDEA or downloaded from the CTA or SDEA websites (also see p. 14). And do not forget to vote!

*Elizabeth Ahlgren may be contacted via email at [elizahlgren@yahoo.com](mailto:elizahlgren@yahoo.com).*



## Retirees, get ready to Read Across America

SDEA-R has been busy with two general membership luncheons, a breakfast social, eight retirees being trained for Read San Diego, the annual Health and Welfare Benefits seminar, and participation in the school board election with more to come.

**Get Ready to Read:** SDEA-R has adopted Read Across America as a special project this year. If you would like to share your love for reading with children, you can volunteer to read in a classroom the first week of March by contacting Joan Robinson at 619-296-1603 or at [joanrob@ephemeron.org](mailto:joanrob@ephemeron.org). "Remember, you're never too old, too wacky, too wild to pick up a book and read with a child." — "This Active Life", January 2009

Our next SDEA-R general membership luncheon meeting is on April 6 at the 94<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron restaurant, with a presenter coming from the Department of Consumer Affairs on the topic of Fraud and Identity Theft related to senior concerns. There will be a

silent auction to raise funds to give a gift card to a teacher store to a new teacher. Donations of items for the silent auction or straight donations can be dropped off at SDEA with Larry Moreno.

**Did You Know:** That HR235 has been introduced to repeal the social security offset and windfall provision? Bob Filner and Brian Bilbray have signed on in support of the bill.

**Revisited:** CTA/NEA-Retired members are now eligible for one half-hour free consultation per year, on any matter, whether employment related or not, with participating Group Legal Services Attorneys. Call CTA Member Benefits for further information. Contact Carolyn Luckenbaugh at 650-552-5267.





# SDEA members support Read Across America

by MARION SNELL  
 Teacher Librarian, Kimbrough Elementary  
 SDEA Member

Read Across America is a national event sponsored by NEA to celebrate reading. It is held on March 2, Dr. Seuss' birthday, or on the closest weekday each year. This year it will take place Monday, March 2. In California, CTA is also a sponsor. Locally activities are supported by SDEA.

While NEA pretty much sticks to the Seuss theme, this year CTA has chosen to feature different books by Californian authors. This year's theme is "Reading is Cool" and the book is *Snowpeople* with illustrations by Will Terry.

To find ideas for how to celebrate and download artwork, recommended reading lists, and *Six Keys to Helping a Child Become a Good Reader* (available in nine languages), go to <http://www.cta.org/community/Read+Across+America/>.

N.E.A. materials may be found at [www.nea.org/readacross](http://www.nea.org/readacross).

Available online resources include printable bookplates, folder covers and bookmarks, such as the one below. Feel to cut it out and keep it as a reminder of this great upcoming event!



Read Across America  
 READING IS COOL

CTA nea  
 California Teachers Association

Illustrations © 2008 by Will Terry. All rights reserved. Used by permission from Will Terry.

"Forget your leaders. Take us to your teachers."

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## Got SERP questions?

So... what exactly is a SERP?

How many carats will the handshake be?

Will members of the Board be cutting holes in the parachute when no one is looking?

Psst... check the website!

[www.sdea.net](http://www.sdea.net)

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— Next session starts March 30 —

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## Remember to Vote!

### SDEA 2009 Spring General Election

For the Election of:

**LOCAL** – Online Election  
 SDEA Board of Directors  
 Seat 1, 4, 6 (PARTIAL), 7, 8 (TERMED), 10, 11  
 CTA State Council Delegates seat(s): 1,2,3,6,7,11 (TERMED), 13, 14 & 16  
 NEA/RA Election

**STATE** – paper ballots mailed to home  
 CTA Service Ctr. Council At-Large State Council Seat  
 NEA/RA Delegates

**LOCAL:** For SDEA Local Voting Instructions, please send SDEA your personal email or register on MY CTA. If using MyCTA, log in prior to Spring General Election to ensure no problems. Member CTA # is on the mailing label of the members' CTA California Educator magazine.

**STATE:** CTA/NEA State Voting Instructions with paper ballot(s) will be mailed home to all Active Members.

**Timelines for the General Election include:**  
 Deadline for Nomination (Rep. Council) — Feb. 18  
 Deadline for Campaign Statements and Fliers (300) — Feb. 20  
 Election — March 9-20  
 Deadline to cast ballot (online or receipt at SDEA no later than 5:00 pm) — March 20  
 Ballots Verified and Counted — March 23-25  
 Candidates Notified of Results — by March 26  
 Date Election is Official (Board Cert.) — April BoD Mtg.

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 E-mail [admission@fielding.edu](mailto:admission@fielding.edu)







# Time to Stull the Board!



photo courtesy of Camille Zombro

Last year, Board members declined invitations to speak to teachers at a RIF rally (left)... but we kept their seats warm for them. How are they doing now?



## Keep sharing your thoughts!

Until we have a contract, we will be wearing our red SDEA shirts to show that together we *are* stronger. Send in your red shirt photos to be featured in The Advocate! Please include contact information.

**Keep sending in letters! This month, we'd like to hear your thoughts on the School Board. In honor of the upcoming evaluation deadlines, the Advocate will be "Stulling" the school board. Help us out! Do they earn an "effective" rating?**

Advocate questions, comments and submissions may be directed to [advocate@sdea.net](mailto:advocate@sdea.net).

<http://www.sdea.net>

**San Diego Education Association**  
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