

THE ADVOCATE

SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

STANDING UP FOR OUR SCHOOLS

In January SDEA members will start contract bargaining with SDUSD. To prepare for bargaining, most schools held a Bargaining Input Session to brainstorm ideas for improvements and to vote on bargaining priorities. Union members also surveyed parent activists at their schools. The results of both the Bargaining Input Sessions and parent survey were reported back to the members elected to lead SDEA and the SDEA Bargaining Team. Those results were used to develop the SDEA bargaining platform below. *Now SDEA members will vote Dec. 5 – 12 at each school to ratify the SDEA bargaining platform:*

MAKE SPECIAL EDUCATION WORK

Schools need the resources to educate *all* of our students, including moderate/severe caseload limits and enough staff to meet IEP requirements.

MORE COUNSELORS & NURSES

Classrooms will be safer and we can curb behavior issues with more counselors and nurses, and no cuts to psychologists.

SMALLER ELEMENTARY CLASS SIZE

In 2012, SDEA members won the lowest secondary class size limit of large, urban school districts in California. Now it's time to do the same for elementary. Every elementary student deserves to be in an appropriately sized class with a hard limit — no more averages across classrooms.

FUND OUR FUTURE

California is the richest state in the nation but ranks 41st in per student funding. California is the 5th largest economy in the world, and SDUSD is the 2nd largest school district in the state. The money is here to fund our future. Now we need to do it.

DEFEND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

There's a nationwide shortage of teachers because the level of education for our job is not commensurate with our pay. We need competitive pay and fully-paid family healthcare benefits to attract the best and brightest to our profession – and keep us.

RESPECT EDUCATORS' RIGHTS

Educators' working conditions are our students' learning conditions. When SDUSD doesn't respect our rights, it's hurting not just educators, but our schools, too. We demand that Supt. Marten and her administration respect our rights, resolve grievances, and stop unfair labor practices.

FIGHTING FOR STUDENTS WITH IEPs

The Special Education program at Marshall Middle School was an example of how inclusion and co-teaching can work when Special Education and General Education educators are supported and have time to collaborate.

Because the district and Human Resources cut staff to the bare minimum early in the school year and due to their failure to fully account for all students with IEPs, the SPED staff at Marshall have been cut and the program has suffered as a result.

This is what happens when you make decisions based solely on finance and not on instruction and student need. What HR would define as being "over staffed" is just enough to make the program work at a school like Marshall and that is now painfully clear after the staffing cuts.

Union members are fighting back by organizing and filing grievances to demand the restoration of a M/M Education Specialist position. At the grievance meeting (*photo below*) special education teachers, general education teachers, paraprofessionals, the school psychologist, and others joined the meeting and spoke to the damage that has been done as a result of the staffing cuts.

Our students deserve the services required by their IEPs and an instructional environment that affords them a positive educational experience.

Together we are stronger!



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LETTERS IN SOLIDARITY

I'll stay out of politics when politics stays out of my classroom

In the last Advocate, we shared SDEA's strategic plan with members. As we shared, we are not engaged in separate small battles but one big fight for the schools our students deserve.

It is our contract campaign that is the foundation for all our work moving forward. Our success depends on building deep and powerful structures at our schools and in our programs.

We must build these structures to win our contract fight, which we all know is connected to our fight to elect a pro-public education school board. These battles are also connected to the fight to pass the Schools and Communities First initiative that will infuse more than \$11 billion dollars into California's schools, public services, and neighborhoods.

As you can see, much of this work is political. Working to elect school board members, lobbying legislators, and putting funding initiatives on the ballot are our new reality.

For too long, we hoped our local and state elected officials would do the right thing when it came to public education. Now, we see that we cannot always depend on those folks to make good decisions, even when they run on pro-public education platforms.

Whether it's class size or Special Education or even what time our schools start, there are lots of people out there, most of them non-educators, who like to tell us what we should be doing in our classrooms. There are even more who want to see our classrooms transformed into private spaces that generate profits, as opposed to well-educated citizens who have the skills and knowledge to demand a better world.

We must be proactive in making sure the right people and the right policies are in place so that we have a true voice in what happens in our classrooms.

SDEA hasn't always made politics a priority, but we can no longer ignore politics because politics won't ignore me or you or our classrooms.

Together, we can raise our voices over those of the privatizers and reformers and advocate for ourselves and our students.

Together, we can ensure that there are enough resources to build the schools our students deserve.

KISHA BORDEN
SDEA PRESIDENT

SCOTT MULLIN
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

CLASS SIZES TOO BIG? DISTRICT OFFERS PATIENCE

Superintendent Cindy Marten's administration is trying to unwind our secondary class size cap win.

SDEA members won a secondary class size hard cap of 36, which was first implemented in the 2012-2013 school year. What does this mean? On first day of each school year and every day after, a secondary academic class cannot exceed 36 students.

Approximately 20 teachers at Patrick Henry High School were over the 36-cap in one or more periods beginning on August 26 of this school year. Teachers at this site immediately exercised their rights and filed a grievance.

In response to the grievance, the principal stated **"Patience is the only remedy I can offer at this time"** and gave them a timeline of reducing overages by October 16. That's eight weeks!

Superintendent Marten's administration is taking the position that secondary class size rules don't take

effect until the eighth week of school. This rule is nowhere to be found in the union contract. The District's most recent response to this grievance asserts a practice and necessity for flexibility and has implemented a fall staffing and monitoring process. This is just Superintendent Martin's administration trying to roll back our rights.

At all levels of this process, there has been no respect for the union contract and the District has not participated in the grievance process in good faith.

In addition to zero attempt to make the affected teachers whole, the District denies any violation occurring during the eight weeks of overages. Therefore, since the responses Patrick Henry High School teachers have received have been unsatisfactory, they will be entering into the arbitration process to fight for their rights and rights previously awarded to all secondary teachers in their union contract.



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 CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS VCBA

Prevent Holiday Weight Gain This Season

'Tis the season for celebrations, family and lots of yummy treats. Research shows that Americans typically gain 1-2 pounds during the holidays. Protect your waistline with these tips:

-  Give your holiday favorites a healthy makeover. Opt for less rich ingredients like fat-free or skim milk, applesauce or low-fat yogurt.
-  Avoid overeating. Choose small portions and fill your plate with all of the food groups. Don't skip meals during the day and nosh on fiber-rich foods to keep hunger at bay.
-  Remember the spirit of the season. Mingle and focus on the company of loved ones at gatherings.
-  Stay active. Hit the dance floor, play games or go for a walk after a holiday meal.

The holidays can be busy. Download the MyUCSDHealth app and take your health care with you:

- * Book a same-day appointment at an Express Care clinic
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