

# THE ADVOCATE

SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

## SDEA MEMBERS AND PARENTS

— HOST FORUM FOR SAFE REOPENING CRITERIA —

On November 19, SDEA and the SDUSD parent members of San Diegans for a Science-Based School Reopening [co-hosted an online forum](#) featuring a panel of scientists and public health experts as well as SDEA President Kisha Borden. The event featured an engaging discussion of the various factors that inform our return to in-person learning in SDUSD including epidemiology, physical and mental health, and instruction during this crisis.

Dr. Natasha Martin, Associate Professor of Infectious Diseases and Global Public Health and co-director of UCSD’s Return to Learn program, gave a presentation on [“Modeling the Impact of Asymptomatic Testing Strategies in Schools,”](#) which explored the critical role that comprehensive COVID testing plays in keeping students and staff safe. While no one method of prevention by itself is 100-percent effective, COVID testing is a critical component of a layered defense against the virus in our schools, with each measure like

ventilation, wearing masks and physical distancing knocking off some percentage of transmission risk. Dr. Martin likened this approach to a “swiss cheese model,” where biweekly testing of all students and staff, along with hygiene measures, can help us close ranks and prevent almost 90-percent of potential COVID cases in schools.

The forum was co-moderated by SDUSD parents Dr. Lisa Delano-Wood, neuropsychologist and co-director of UCSD’s Memory, Aging & Resilience Clinic, and Dawniel Stewart, doula and co-founder of the San Diego Women’s March. They facilitated an in-depth exploration with child psychologist panelists on the need to prioritize our precarious mental health and reopen schools cautiously and in phases, so that students, families and educators don’t experience the whipsaw back and forth between opening and closing that exacerbates the stress that all of us are experiencing in these extraordinary times.

SDEA site representatives recruited

educators and parents from their school sites to attend the event, which led to more than 190 attendees on a school night. Even though the forum went 30 minutes over its intended end time, almost all attendees stayed until the end and over 150 questions were submitted to the panelists, who graciously gave their time and continued to answer inquiries well into the night.

Responding to popular demand, the organizers have committed to host future informational events that will also provide an opportunity for parents, educators, and community members to strengthen relationships by learning from each other’s perspectives. This will lay the foundation for us to work together to ensure that when schools do reopen with the support of our new, pro-science federal administration and San Diego County Board of Supervisors, the reopening follows the utmost safety standards provided by public health experts.

### Swiss Cheese Model

You can reduce your COVID-19 risk with multiple layers of defense.



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# LETTERS IN SOLIDARITY

**KISHA BORDEN**  
SDEA PRESIDENT



**KYLE WEINBERG**  
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

# WHAT A YEAR!!

We hope you had a restful Thanksgiving break. It is hard to believe 2020 is just about over. This has been a year like no other. A year that no one could ever have imagined.

This has been a year of major challenges. We had just started bargaining our new contract, when COVID began to sweep across the country. As case rates increased, SDEA called on the District to put the health and safety of our students and educators at the forefront and do the right thing. On March 13, SDUSD heeded our call and called for a district-wide shut down. At the time, we all thought we would return in a few weeks once the COVID spread slowed down. But, here we are, nine months later, and school buildings are still closed to the majority of our students.

What every educator has accomplished over these last nine months is nothing short of incredible! Once we realized that we would have to transition to online crisis teaching, educators completely reimaged every aspect of their practice. Many had to learn how to navigate new online learning platforms. We all had to learn and master videoconferencing with platforms like Zoom or Google Meets. We added new words to our vocabulary like synchronous and asynchronous (ughh!!). Many educators spent their summer break learning new skills to meet the demands of this new way of teaching. Whatever the challenge, we met it head on because that is what we do. Educators have always made the best of what we have to work with for the benefit of our students.

We continue to have on-going challenges. We must continue to reach out and make connections with our most disengaged and/or disadvantaged students. We must ensure that online learning is working for our students and where it is not, we must continue to make improvements. We must continue to ensure that our students with special needs are receiving the services and support they need and are entitled to receive. We must fight to ensure that teacher voice and input is included in any reopening plan created by the District. We will meet those challenges.

So, as this year comes to an end and we safely celebrate the holidays, rest, recuperate, and recharge. Make sure to pay special attention to those who have been neglected over the last few months, including yourself.

When we return in the new year, we will continue the fight to ensure the health and safety of our school communities.

Your innovation, perseverance, compassion and dedication to your students and your practice has been phenomenal. Not only do your students and their families appreciate you, but your colleagues and Union appreciate you also. Let's continue to support one another and stand up for each other. Together we are stronger and if we continue to stand together and fight together in the new year, who knows what we can accomplish!

Happy holidays and may we all have a happy and healthy new year!

**KISHA BORDEN**  
SDEA PRESIDENT

**KYLE WEINBERG**  
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

We focus on what's important so you can do the same.

Between playing fetch and belly rubs, chances are you don't have time to research and find an insurance plan that works for you.

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OUR PROMISE

TO SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT OUR CHILDREN

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# SDEA

## SCHOLARSHIP ANNOUNCEMENT

PHOTO: DELECE COOK



SDEA annually offers scholarships for members and members' dependents. The Member Application is for current SDEA members who wish to further their education. The Dependent Application is for graduating seniors and current college-enrolled students who are dependents of a current SDEA member.

To download a copy of the application, visit the SDEA website, [www.sdea.net](http://www.sdea.net). The deadline to submit completed applications is Friday, May 7, 2021.

## PEER ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW SUPPORT

Have you been feeling overwhelmed during distance learning? You are not alone! The PAR team is here to help any classroom teacher.

The PAR program is completely confidential, and the Consulting Teachers' support can include lesson planning, technology, and curriculum support.

Support from the PAR program's Consulting Teachers can be two weeks or two months, depending on what works for you. Complete the PAR referral [Google form](#) if you are interested. A PAR Consulting Teacher will reach out to you promptly.

Please contact Karen Nares ([knares@sandi.net](mailto:knares@sandi.net)), Matt Moody ([mmoody@sandi.net](mailto:mmoody@sandi.net)) or Leah Allen ([lallen@sandi.net](mailto:lallen@sandi.net)) with additional questions.



CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS  
**VEBA**  
RESOURCE CENTER

THE VEBA RESOURCE CENTER IS EXCITED TO  
ANNOUNCE OUR NEWLY REDESIGNED WEBSITE  
[WWW.VEBARESOURCECENTER.COM](http://WWW.VEBARESOURCECENTER.COM)

We invite you to visit our new site,  
explore our updated content, and take  
one of our 300+ virtual classes offered  
through the Virtual VRC!



Visit our VRC channels for Well-Being  
Resources and Updates

# ANTI-UNION CANVASSERS?

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF AN ANTI-UNION CANVASSER COMES TO MY DOOR?

- 1** Know that they may make it seem like they're associated with SDEA. They aren't.
- 2** Insist that they tell you how they got your address and employer information.
- 3** Try to get their full name and the name of the organization. (They may be reluctant to tell you their name, but they have yours so it's only fair that you have theirs.)
- 4** Tell them to remove you from their contact list.
- 5** Tell your school's Association Representative (AR) about the visit right away. They may systematically visit every union member at your school, so warn your co-workers.
- 6** You can print and post this [Freedom Foundation – Do not knock! sign](#) on your door.

## DID AN ANTI-UNION GROUP VISIT YOU AT HOME OR SEND YOU AN EMAIL LATELY?

Union members are reporting that over the last week, canvassers from the anti-union group Opt Out Today visited their homes. The paid canvassers tried to get them to drop out of SDEA.

## WHAT IS OPT OUT TODAY AND WHO IS REALLY BEHIND IT?

Opt Out Today is a front organization of the extreme political group **Freedom Foundation**. Freedom Foundation is part of a network of pro-privatization, anti-tax, anti-union groups. These groups don't support us and our students and are actually fighting against core values of many teachers, like stopping privatization of public education and protecting teacher pensions. They claim they're on the side of teachers and public education, but in reality they seek to take professional respect and bargaining rights from educators and turn over control of public education to CEOs and the corporations that financially back them.

## WHAT DO THESE ANTI-UNION GROUPS SAY ABOUT TEACHER STRIKES?

As teachers across the country have been rising up and striking for better schools and better jobs, these groups developed a strategy to smear striking teachers. At the top of the list of talking points is the claim that "teacher strikes hurt kids and low-income families." "It's unfortunate that teachers are protesting low wages by punishing other low-wage parents and their children," it advises anti-union campaigners. When it comes to the historic strike of 44,000 LAUSD teachers last year, in which teachers were fighting for a nurse and counselor in every school, class size limits, an end to charter co-location, and a reduction in standardized testing, the Freedom Foundation wasn't impressed. The Freedom Foundation cynically characterized the teacher strike as an effort to "destroy school choice for thousands of families and make teachers less accountable for their future." Does this sound like a group that is on the side of teachers and public education?