

THE ADVOCATE

Our proposal is right as rain!



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SDEA Mission Statement

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.

Special Ed. campaign continues

Last fall, SDUSD implemented a "Specialized Academic Instruction" model without adequate preparation or support for the educators responsible for its implementation. In response, SDEA members working in both special and general education came together in September 2009 to identify and prioritize their issues.

- IEP document compliance,
Workload demands on both general and special educators, and
Implementing an inclusion model that provides for a continuum of services for students and training and planning time for educators.

Another outcome of these meetings was the formation of the SDEA Special Education Steering Committee (SSESC). The Chairperson of this committee is Mary Jane Zappia, a speech and language pathologist at Bayview Terrace Elementary. The SSESC is charged with planning and leading our continued efforts to organize around Special Education issues.

our students.

At the last Special Education organizing meeting, SDEA and CTA staff trained members on how to file uniform complaints with the California Department of Education. Educators can individually or collectively file formal complaints regarding matters such as failure to comply with IEP document requirements, or assignment of special education teachers to students outside their credential area. The SSESC has also reached out to the Joint Workload Committee, a subcommittee of the SDEA bargaining team. Joint Workload Committee members attended the Feb. 8 SSESC meeting and discussed the agreement between SDEA and the District to move from a caseload to a workload model. Union and District bargaining teams are slated to hold a series bargaining sessions regarding this issue in the coming months.

The SSESC is meeting monthly to support site actions during this time of reform and contract negotiations. The committee's next meeting will be held Monday, March 8. At that meeting a representative group of members from preschool, elementary, middle school and high school sites will be formally appointed to the committee. Once formalized, the SSESC will work with SDEA staff to support site actions and to advocate for meaningful reform across the District.

The state initiatives are coming!

by CAMILLE ZOMBRO
SDEA President
and JIM GROTH
CTA Director

2010 promises to be another high-profile election year. Here in San Diego, voters will decide on two School Board seats (both John deBeck and Katherine Nakamura are up) and a possible parcel tax. Across the state, Californians will choose a new governor, elect state legislators, and take positions on a wide range of statewide propositions.

A variety of those propositions are in circulation for signature-gathering right now, and the CTA State Council (including representatives from SDEA) has taken a position on several. Every CTA member needs to know the facts as we continue to prepare for a busy year. Here's a look at what's coming:

"The Repeal Corporate Tax Loopholes Act" (sponsored and supported by CTA): This initiative would repeal the \$2 billion of new tax loopholes for corporations and oil companies that were added to the 2009-10 compromise budget passed by the state legislature last fall. These loopholes were negotiated in secret with no public hearings.

"The Corporate Political Accountability Act" (supported by CTA): This initiative would

hold corporations accountable to shareholders before spending money on political campaigns or initiatives by requiring a vote of stockholders on political expenditures.

"The New Public Employees Benefits Reform Act" (opposed by CTA): This initiative would significantly alter CalSTRS contributions for new employees by, among other changes: reducing pension formulae from 2.5 percent per year to 1.65 percent per year; requiring that retirees could not draw from CalSTRS until age 67; requiring retirees to work full time for the last five years of employment in order to receive locally negotiated healthcare coverage; limiting maximum retirement benefits to 75 percent of highest earned income; and several other changes which would undermine the fiscal integrity of CalSTRS and decimate the current retirement system.

In addition, campaign groups are organizing to make a concerted effort to qualify a "paycheck deception" act to restrict union political activities. CTA continues to closely monitor these efforts.

Check the CTA website for the latest information on these important issues (www.cta.org). In the meantime, we encourage you to refrain from signing petitions to place initiatives on the ballot.

What do we want? When do we want it?

Now!

Over 1,000 teachers, nurses, counselors, librarians, support professionals, parents and community leaders braved the rain and rallied together at the Education Center on Tuesday, Feb. 9 to urge the SDUSD School Board to settle a fair contract with San Diego's educators.

Even while SDUSD teacher pay ranks among the lowest in San Diego County (33rd of 43 County districts, according to the *Sacramento Bee*), the San Diego Education Association has proposed a pay cut in the form of three student-contact furlough days in order to preserve class sizes and protect programs and services in our neighborhood schools. But the District's history of wasteful spending, combined with the current economic crisis, puts the future of our students *and* our city at risk. In our Feb. 4 bargaining proposal to SDUSD, SDEA members call on the District to make an equal commitment to protecting our students by:

- Keeping class sizes low by not laying off teachers,
- Preserving core student programs and services like nursing and counseling, and
- Bringing San Diego teacher pay up from among the lowest in the County once the current economic crisis has passed.

Patrick Henry High School English teacher Mark Frerichs spoke at the rally, demanding that the School Board accept SDEA's fair and reasonable proposal so educators and students can get back to the critical work of teaching and learning. "After years of overwork for underpay, in massive numbers and with a unified voice on behalf of our kids, San Diego's teachers come here to offer the District money," Frerichs said. "Teachers call on SDUSD to embrace fiscal responsibility and accept teachers' pay cut offer."

Excerpt from Mark Frerichs' speech

Teachers are, I say, a little bit magic. We find a way to believe anew in our students each and every day. But Mr. Barrera, Mr. Kowba, with you our good will and patience are... well, let's just say we're facing a bit of a budget crisis in the magic department. Your predecessors have already squandered much of it by balancing the budget largely on our backs in the form of below-average salaries and ever-increasing class sizes. Your predecessors have been profligate with programs but parsimonious with people — us, your most valuable, magical resource. Today, we choose to expend a little of that magic on our district. We are here today in good faith to strike a bargain. But they had better not mistake us. We are not Charlie Brown. We choose, for today at least, to believe that this time, with this chance, our District leadership will finally do the right thing and hold that ball for us.

San Diego's teachers, forced to wait for a fair settlement because 'there is no money', have watched millions of dollars spent on consultants and AP exams and PSAT exams — the list goes on and on. Yet, do we come here today with hands outstretched, demanding that similar largesse be bestowed upon us? No. After years of overwork for underpay, in massive numbers and with a unified voice on behalf of our kids, San Diego's teachers come here to offer the District money. —Mark Frerichs, PHHS

A fair contract!



photos by Nena Najera

Top: Teachers chanted together to make sure the Board could hear us inside the building.
Center: A fair contract would be music to SDEA members' ears.
Bottom: Proponents of public education great and small turned out on Tuesday to support SDEA's bargaining proposal.

Visiting teachers: Then and now

Visiting teachers are an integral part of SDEA's membership base, going back to 1994 when VTs voted by a 4-to-1 majority to join SDEA. Working as a substitute teacher can be a way to have a flexible schedule, to get one's foot in the door with the District, or to continue working with students post-retirement—but it is frequently an unrequited and thankless job. Additionally, many administrators see visiting teachers as without rights and easily trampled upon. In fact, SDEA frequently defends visiting teachers against unfair evaluations and dismissals. Visiting teachers' rights are spelled out in Article 33 of the contract. Wages, working hours, aspects of job assignment, evaluations, post and bid access and sick leave accrual are all part of visiting teachers' Article 33 rights. The SDEA website has a variety of VT resources, including a Know Your Rights flyer and VT membership forms.

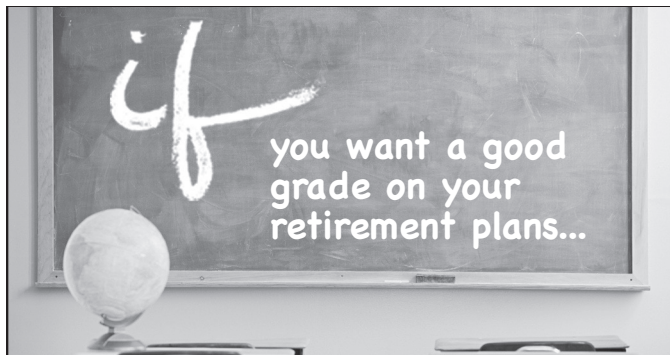
SDEA has negotiated a variety of benefits for visiting teachers, including the highest rate of pay of all visiting teachers in San Diego County, varying from \$134.64 a day for short-term assignments, to \$150.47 a day for long-term assignments. Visiting teachers are also entitled to prep period rights just like any other teacher. In the case of an unforeseen emergency, VTs may be required to cover another teacher's class during the prep period. After three hours of prep period work, a visiting teacher can submit the information to the site administrator for payment. Each period will be paid at the pro rata rate of the day-to-day visiting teacher pay rate. SDEA has created a simple form to document hours worked for visiting teachers, available on the website. Visiting teachers also accrue sick leave that is credited when the visiting teacher is hired on as a regular employee of the District. VTs

have access to a fair evaluation process that is subject to the grievance procedure, as well as special access to post and bid.

In 2008, SDEA's Rep. Council, which includes VT representatives, voted to extend the agency fee deduction to VTs. Because SDEA has a legal responsibility to represent all employees covered by the contract, and because all other certificated employees covered by the contract already paid an agency fee, the Council felt that it was only fair to extend the agency fee provision to VTs. Deduction of the fee does not mean one is a member. VTs can still join the union as full members, at no additional cost, by signing a membership form at the union office. Additional membership benefits include an active voice and vote in all affairs of the union; million dollar liability insurance; access to free legal consultation; and discounts on goods and services, none of which are available to non-members.

Elections Update

Each year, SDEA members have the opportunity to select representatives from among their colleagues to serve in a variety of elected positions. If you are interested in serving as an SDEA Officer, SDEA Board Member, State Council Delegate and/or NEA RA Delegate, your Declaration of Candidacy form(s) must be received in the SDEA office by 5 p.m. on **Feb. 17**. The local SDEA spring election will be held online **March 9-22**, and the state CTA election will be conducted via paper ballots which will be mailed home. Materials for the 2010 election are available for download at www.sdea.net/about/sdea-elections.



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Online Special Edition: Advocate Columnists

February brings opportunities for volunteering

February is the month often thought of as the month of love. Retired educators have a lot of love to share. If you are like me, I like to volunteer, but on a short-term basis. There are a multitude of opportunities out there just waiting for folks with our experience to volunteer.

READ ACROSS AMERICA: In March retirees are invited to assist their SDEA active brothers and sisters by volunteering to read in a classroom. Members of the SDEA-R Executive Committee did this last year and had a rewarding experience doing so.

READING CLUB: Your SDEA-R Executive Committee heard a presentation from the County of San Diego Parks and Recreation department about an intergenerational project that has been piloted in the Spring Valley Community. It is called the Intergenerational Math and Reading Club and is partnered with Aging and Independence Services and UCSD. It began with a math program and is now offering a reading program. It is apparent that seniors are living longer and healthier lives and can be engaged in meaningful activities in retirement. At the same time, children and youth, at an increasing rate, face difficult challenges such as single parent homes and declining resources in public schools, including increased class sizes. Who is more qualified to work with these young people than teachers who have the know-how and experience to share?

The Reading Club will take place from April 21-May 27, 2010 on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3:30-5:00 p.m. Volunteers are needed for this program. Volunteers will help students with homework for the first half hour; UCSD will present for the next

half hour to 45 minutes; volunteers will then work one on one with the students. The program will be held at the Spring Valley Community Center at 8735 Jamacha Blvd., Spring Valley, CA. This program seems ideas for educators who are looking to extend their profession into retirement by helping others.

To become a part of this very innovative and successful program, which the innovators hope will grow throughout the state, you need to become a senior volunteer through RSVP, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program. You can do that by filling out the attached form and mailing it in to the appropriate address. If you look on line under RSVP, you will see many other opportunities for volunteering, too.

If you have questions about the program, contact Renell Nailon at 610-479-1832.

SDEA-R CHOIR? For the first time, SDEA-R had difficulty getting holiday entertainment for the annual holiday luncheon. Usually we have a school choir, but for many varied reasons, many educational, we could not secure one this year. We tried various other avenues and finally, Tina Daniels, an SDEA staff member who has a beautiful voice, came to our rescue. One of our retirees suggested perhaps we should have an SDEA-R choir. If anyone if interested in participating in one or actually forming and directing one, then please contact me at 8588-485-9888 or heet2@san.rr.com.



SDEA-R GENERAL MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON APRIL. 5, 2010-11:30 a.m.
94th AERO SQUADRON
8885 Balboa Avenue, San Diego, CA 92123
858-560-6771

NAME _____

PHONE _____

Number of Reservations at \$17.00 per person (includes lunch buffet, non-alcoholic beverages (except sodas), tax and gratuity) _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Make checks payable to SDEA-R and send it to Diana Hayes at SDEA, 10393 San Diego Mission Road, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92108. If you have questions, contact Norma Heeter at 858-485-9888 or heet2@san.rr.com. Please RSVP by MARCH 29, 2010. TOPICS: SILENT AUCTION, SDEA-R OFFICER NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS, TENTATIVE SPEAKER FROM LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS. PLEASE NOTE: OUR MEETING ATTENDANCE HAS BEEINCREASING, SO ADVANCE NOTICE WILL ALLOW US TO PROVIDE FOR ADEQUATE SPACE. PLEASE RESPOND EARLY.