

THE ADVOCATE

Union members fight against 1,534 layoffs

Since the May 1 Community March Against Education Cuts, SDEA members have continued our strong push to bring back all of the educators who have been laid off.

On May 11, counselors from schools from across the District paid a visit to Trustee John Lee Evans' home to urge him to recall the over-noticed educators immediately.

On May 14, members and students at La Jolla High School held a rally against the layoffs. SDEA AR Pat Thomas, who was instrumental in organizing this rally, was interviewed by several local news stations. She spoke about the importance of rescinding the layoffs and the need for the District to stop its historical exaggeration of deficits.

See LAYOFFS, page 4





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We must push for adequate school funding

Our union is strong because we are a collective of over 8,000 dedicated and passionate educators who work day in and day out to brighten the future of our students. Our union's strength has never been, and will never be, dependent on any one individual and we are reminded of this every time we visit school sites or join you at a rally or union meeting.

These final weeks of school will test not only our resolve as educators, but our strength as union members. For years we've witnessed and felt the impact of severe budget cuts on our classrooms and our families. We've spent summer after summer on pins and needles as we wait for pink slips to be rescinded and fight to get back to the schools we've built our working lives around. Over the coming weeks our resolve and strength will be put to the test as we come face to face with the reality that our schools, our students and our families are once again at great risk. Though the scale of the crisis we face is great and though some may attempt to divide us, I have great hope and faith that together we are not only stronger but that we can navigate the rough waters ahead.

As budgets grow tighter, we must push the District to look at other possibilities before asking educators for pay cuts. They must become more creative in dealing with the budget problems confronting schools today. It is not uncommon to restructure and change some of their highly paid administrators' positions to part-time. This will not provide millions of dollars in savings, but every little bit helps. As the state predicts a \$17 billion shortfall



Letters in Solidarity

Bill Freeman

SDEA President

in projected revenue this year, business should not be done as usual. We all understand that we would want to see no one lose their job, but the education of our students should not be tied to educator cuts year in and year out.

We have learned that we can't depend on anyone else to protect our schools. Many of our legislators failed us last year when they decided they would not allow us to vote on extending state taxes. We will continue to fight to keep our learning communities together and provide the high quality education that our students need and deserve. It seems that every year we have to fight for simple rights for our students. We all know that we can't meet the needs of our students when we have 35 of them in a classroom. Yet, classrooms around this state are overflowing with too many students and not enough educators. The time has come for us to come together and take control of public education. We must unite and work to bring more money to education. Throughout the summer we will conduct community actions reaching out to families soliciting support for the Governor's initiative and other actions that will assist us in improving and protecting education. We must strengthen our collectivity as we organize actions over the summer.

Bill Freeman

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SDEA President

May Revise: Flat funding or possible Jan. cuts

On May 14, Governor Jerry Brown announced budget projections that show that without additional revenue increases or budget cuts, California will face a budget shortfall of \$15.7 billion by the end of 2012-13. A central part of the Governor's proposed budget is the constitutional amendment initiative in place for the November 2012 ballot. This amendment would provide a temporary funding stream for public education and other public services. If this tax increase does not pass, significant mid-year cuts could be triggered in 2012-13. These cuts are projected to a nearly \$441 cut per student, an increase from the projected cut of \$370 per student in the January 2012 budget proposal. This means SDUSD could face a potential \$48 million cut to per-student funding in January 2013, if the initiative were to fail

and mid-year cuts were to be triggered. If the initiative passes, state funding levels remain flat from this year to next year for all California school districts. That means that SDUSD can expect to receive \$1.1 billion next fiscal year, exactly the same as this fiscal year. There are no cost of living adjustments expected at all to come from the state, according to the Governor's budget projection. The Governor's tax amendment would temporarily increase the personal income tax on the state's wealthiest taxpayers (those making \$250,000 to those making over \$1 million a year) for seven years and temporarily increase the sales tax by one-quarter percent for four years. The measure guarantees that these new revenues go directly to schools. It will generate an estimated \$17 billion over the next four years beginning 2013.

Fighting the fight... *site by site!*

La Jolla Cluster rises up against layoffs

Students, parents, teachers, staff, administrators and alumni of La Jolla's public schools stood up for public education on Monday, May 14.

"How can we fulfill our mission to prepare our community's students for college if 20 percent of our faculty—33 percent of the math department alone—are laid off?" asked Patricia Thomas, math teacher and SDEA Association Representative at LJHS. "We need our full-time librarian and full-time school nurse, and these cuts could result in math and English class sizes of 45 students."

Congressman Bob Filner and Congressional candidate Scott Peters both attended the rally to show their support for public education. Betsy Mueller, President of the LJHS Parent Teachers Association, joined educators to call for an end to layoffs and encouraged La Jolla parents to speak out at the May 22 Board meeting to protest final layoff notices.



Mission Bay schools hold Cluster-wide day of action

SDEA members at all six schools in the Mission Bay Cluster rallied outside of their schools on Thursday, May 31 as part of a Cluster-wide Day of Action to tell the District, "NO Layoffs, NO Concessions!"

Members at Pacific Beach Middle, Bayview Terrace Elementary, Crown Point Elementary, Pacific Beach Elementary and Sessions Elementary rallied at 7 a.m. Then members from all six schools joined together in the afternoon for a Cluster

rally in front of Mission Bay High School. Mission Bay members raised community awareness about the realities of the District budget by passing informational leaflets out to parents in the days leading up to the rallies and at the rallies themselves.

These rallies represent a culmination of the exciting organizing in Mission Bay this year, including a successful fall campaign to prevent the District from closing or reorganizing four of the Cluster's six schools.



SDEA members at PBMS protest District cuts as part of the Mission Bay Cluster May 31 Day of Action.

Tubman Charter to bargain second contract

SDEA members at Harriet Tubman Village Charter School have begun the process of bargaining their second contract with the school—an exciting first for charter school members of SDEA.

Bargaining team members Diego Guajardo, Michelle Mead and Rachel Varga attended the school's May 22 Board meeting, and spoke to the importance and desire of members to reach a quick agreement. Tubman members are seeking to build on a strong first contract

which gave educators a pathway to just cause status, competitive wages and a protected voice at school. The contract has helped create a harmonious atmosphere.

Ensuring another strong contract at Tubman will continue to help in raising the workplace standards for all of us in the education profession. Charter schools without a union contract place a downward pressure on wages, benefits and working conditions of all educators.



Michelle Mead, Diego Guajardo and Rachel Varga have volunteered to serve on the Tubman bargaining team.

Protest at Paradise Hills



Paradise Hills Elementary educators and parents rally against layoffs on May 21.

Layoffs

Continued from p. 1

This event had particularly good turnout from the media as several local stations had live feeds going. Congressman Bob Filner who was also there spoke about the importance of funding education and keeping educators in their current positions. (See page 3 for details.) In addition to LJHS, several other schools within the District held their own rallies and other actions.

May 19 was a busy day at the SDEA office as members and parents gave up a good chunk of their Saturday, and gathered to hold District Trustees accountable. Two groups made up of both parents and SDEA members paid visits to the homes of Trustees Richard Barrera and Kevin Beiser. Another group met with Trustee Scott Barnett at the SDEA office. The uniform demand was simple: as a first step, immediately rescind the

several hundred notices that the District has sent out above and beyond what is necessary by its own admission, and commit to continuing health benefits for all noticed employees until December.

On May 22, SDEA members once again came out in force to the School Board meeting to demand that the Board do the right thing and recall laid off teachers. Teachers, nurses and counselors packed the Board chambers and spoke eloquently.

Finally, on May 31 the six schools in the Mission Bay Cluster held a Cluster-wide Day of Action to protest layoffs. (See story at left for details.)

Unfortunately, the Board made the reckless decision to lay off 1,534 certificated employees, but the efforts of SDEA members will be unabated in fighting to protect our laid off members.

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