

THE ADVOCATE

The power of shared decision-making

Building a robust and effective Site or Program Governance Team (SGT/PGT) takes time and energy. This is one of the main reasons that it is often difficult to generate interest and excitement about starting or joining an SGT. This also makes sense if your site doesn't have an SGT, or had one that wasn't properly composed or effective. The other big reason is that many of our fellow educators, and a far greater number of parents, simply aren't aware of the important role that an SGT can play in improving learning conditions.

The efforts of more than a dozen schools and programs to rebuild Governance Teams across San Diego this year are showing that building effective, properly composed governance teams that fully utilize their scope of authority can make a huge difference in improving school climate and the instructional program.

If you're reading this and thinking to yourself, "I don't know what an SGT is or if we have one," that's okay. Governance Teams were fought for and won during the 1996 strike. Over the years, as educators faced challenges like budget cuts, high stakes testing, and the negatives impacts of corporate reform, SGTs began to slowly atrophy. Like any muscle not regularly utilized, the effectiveness of SGTs weakened over time. The good news is that schools across San Diego are back in the SGT gym and are getting stronger each day.

Sometimes the SGT spark is lit when teachers and parents learn they have far more say in their school budget and instructional program than they realized. Sometimes it's due to folks frustrated by top-down decision-making at a site or program. At some schools, concerns about declining enrollment and the

SGT Scope of Authority

- ✓ Organizing and staffing schools and programs in new ways
- ✓ Involving school and program staff in budget development
- ✓ Altering schedules and learning activities
- ✓ Elimination of bargaining unit positions
- ✓ Changes in the instructional program
- ✓ Changes in elementary prep time subject emphasis
- ✓ Site discipline and safety plans (*see page 3*)
- ✓ Site start and end times
- ✓ And much more!

expansion of poor performing charter schools have brought members of the community together to talk about ways to get involved in improving their neighborhood school.

"SGT helped bring our staff together when morale was low and gave us a voice to make changes and improve our school for everyone," said Karrie Schoettler, an SDEA member who helped build a strong SGT at Mann Middle School.

Whatever the reason, working to build a Governance Team and your school's shared decision-making capacity is important.

WHAT IS AN SGT AND WHERE DOES IT COME FROM?

Governance Teams are required by Article 24 of our union contract and are democratically elected shared decision-making bodies. Governance Teams work together to improve the instructional program and ensure that local stakeholders have a voice in decision-making their local school.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AN SGT AND ILT?

Some Instructional Leadership Teams have been charged with making decisions

about the instructional program. Decisions about the instructional program must be made by the elected SGT, not the ILT.

ILTs can act as a "think tank" and make recommendations to the SGT about instructional program decisions prior to implementation.

WHAT IF MY SITE OR PROGRAM DOESN'T HAVE AN SGT?

Schools and programs have used different ways to get a Governance Team started (or to rebuild an SGT that wasn't effective or properly composed), including:

- Working with your AR and site union members to develop an organizing plan to establish or refocus an SGT. Remember that having an SGT is your right and is required by your SDEA contract.
- Scheduling an SDEA-District SGT training to educate and generate interest in shared decision-making.
- Organizing an interest group of educators, parents, and administration to put together a plan. Often all three of the above options are employed together to build a strong Governance Team.



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Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham SDEA President



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Victory in US Supreme Court

We hope you all enjoyed your well-deserved Spring Break! It has been a busy year in SDEA with our work around member organizing and engagement with Friedrichs vs. CTA, our work to stand up against over-testing, and our work to get an extension of the Proposition 30 income tax. There is much work still to be done in the last few months of the 2015-16 school year. We will be gathering member input for our salary reopener and starting to bargain the salary increase our members deserve. We will continue to increase our membership outreach and engagement, as well as the relevance of our union with our members.

Our goal this year was to have school sites and departments with 95% or higher union membership. Did you know that we have 74 sites and departments that are at 100%? Did you know that 118 sites and departments are at 95% or higher? This could not have been done without the amazing work of our SDEA site representatives (ARs and CRs), Fair Share Task Force, SDEA leadership and SDEA staff. Thank you to everyone who made time to have conversations with your colleagues, shared your story of why you are involved in our union, and spent time in your very busy schedules to build relationships that increase our union strength and solidarity!

On March 29, the United States Supreme Court sent a victory to our students, our communities and working families everywhere by upholding the lower court's ruling in Friedrichs vs. CTA. The decision allows educators across California the opportunity to

come together and make our voices heard on issues that affect all of us such as providing quality public schools and colleges for all students.

This case was never about doing what's best for students. It was a political ploy by the wealthy corporate special interests backing this case to make it harder for working families and the middle class to come together, speak up and get ahead. Educators across the state and nation will continue to advocate for the public education all California students deserve, fight for social justice, and secure better learning and working conditions for students and educators. There are many cases waiting in the wings that will continue to attack our right to come together and stand up for our students and the public education system we all deserve.

As we continue to add new educators, we must reach out to them and support their transition into our profession. Thank you to all of the members that have already started the work of reaching out to new educators. Millennials often have a different perspective when it comes to their role as educators. We must be willing to listen to them and learn from one another's perspectives. We must continue to stand together, engage one another, build relationships and show our opponents that our collective strength and solidarity is much more powerful than their billions of dollars!

Together WE ARE Stronger!

Lindsay Burningham Lindsay Burningham SDEA President

Michelle Sanchez Michelle Sanchez SDEA Vice President

Why do you choose to be a union member?



"I choose to be a member of my union because when educators work together, students, parents and the community benefit."

Peter Oskin Serra High School Social Science



I choose to be a member of my union because SDEA is the vehicle that has and will continue to drive our profession forward. Through the dedicated work of members and SDEA staff, professional development, class sizes, and pay have improved."

Rickeena Boyd Home/Hospital (Polinsky) Primary Teacher

Our contract requires site safety and discipline plans

Our union contract addresses site security and pupil discipline in Sections 11.6 and 11.7, which means certain aspects of security and discipline can be grieved if they are violated. Both security and pupil discipline policies and procedures need to be laid out in a plan, which is developed in concert with the school Site Governance Team (SGT). Both plans should be reviewed at least annually by the SGT, and modified to meet the site's needs. Both plans also need to be provided to all employees at the site within 10 days of reporting to that work location.

Site security plans need to address communication procedures in the event of an emergency, rules and regulations governing the

access to the site by any individual, use of school parking lots, weapons on campus, and anything the site deems appropriate. This is important when dealing with visitation by anyone either on campus, or to a specific educator's classroom or workspace. The site security plan must include a visitation policy, and visitors must be held accountable to it. The California Education Code includes penalties, such as fines, for anyone willfully disrupting the educational program of a school or classroom, and these provisions should be reflected in the site security plan.

Pupil discipline is important in contributing to a successful learning environment. Discipline plans should include expectations for

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our union by
protecting our contract**

student behavior, responsibility for implementation of the plan, and the roles of parents in supporting pupil discipline. Educators also have the right to suspend students, as directed by Education Code, for specific violations. The plan should include how behavior problems will be addressed, and how the administration of

the site will support educators in enforcing discipline.

It is imperative that all SDEA members are involved, through the SGT, in developing and enforcing the plans. A well thought out plan is a good way to avoid having to grieve violations of the contract, which will help school sites function.

Announcements

Wage Increase Reopener Bargaining Survey

During our *Fight for 5!* bargaining campaign, SDEA members won the right to return to the bargaining table this spring to bargain wage *increases*. The contract is closed until June 30, 2017, with no changes except to reopen to increase wages for 2016-17. That means benefits, class size, and anything else other than salary increases stay off the table. Our team will be heading to the bargaining table soon! Look for a brief email survey later this month to help the members of the bargaining team win wage increases that reflect our priorities.

SDEA Budget Hearings

SDEA will be conducting budget hearings from 4-5 p.m. on Thursday, April 21 and Tuesday, April 26 at the SDEA office. These hearings are an opportunity for members to give input on the SDEA budget before it is initially presented to the Rep. Council in May and adopted in June.

SDEA Scholarships

The deadline to apply for SDEA dependent and member scholarships is Friday, May 6 at 5 p.m. The dependent application is for graduating seniors and current college-enrolled students, who are dependents of a current SDEA member. The member application is for current SDEA members who wish to further their education. For more information, visit the scholarships page on the SDEA website or email steinberg_l@sdea.net.

Day of the Educator

SDEA members will celebrate the Day of the Educator on Thursday, May 5 at the SDEA office (10393 San Diego Mission Rd., Suite 100) from 4-6 p.m. Gather up your colleagues and enjoy this event full of food, music and prizes. Food and non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. Let's get together to honor and celebrate the hard work we do for our students!

Annual Notice

A designated portion of SDEA dues is normally allocated to the SDEA Political Action Committee, a general purpose County PAC, through which SDEA/PAC principally supports or opposes local candidates or issues. If you wish this dues amount to remain in the SDEA general fund, contact Larry Moreno at 619-283-4411. In addition, a designated portion of CTA dues is normally allocated to the Association for Better Citizenship (ABC/CTA), a bipartisan political fund through which CTA provides financial support for education issues and CTA-endorsed candidates for local and state offices. Members who choose not to allocate a portion of their dues to the CTA/ABC, but instead want it to remain in the general fund, should complete a CTA-General Fund Allocation Form. Forms are available on the SDEA website: www.sdea.net.



Get The Protection You Deserve Apply by April 30, 2016

Don't miss an exclusive opportunity for San Diego Education Association members to enroll in the CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance plans provided by Standard Insurance Company (The Standard). Here's how you can learn more about the plans and apply for this important coverage:

- Attend an enrollment meeting (ask your Site Rep for details)
- Visit www.standard.com/cta/sdea

Call The Standard at 800.522.0406 (7:00 a.m. — 6:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday — Friday) with questions.

Don't miss this special offer for SDEA members!



For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800-522-0406 (TTY). Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204
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