

THE ADVOCATE

SDEA takes a stand against over-testing

A strong contingent of SDEA members came out to the Jan. 26 School Board meeting to push back against high-stakes testing and advocate for more time to teach and students to learn. SDEA President Lindsay Burningham, Vice President Michelle Sanchez, Treasurer Kisha Borden, Secretary Scott Mullin, SDEA Board members David Erving, Adam Goldstein, Matthew Schneck and Mary Turnberg, and SDEA member Shane Parmely collectively presented two resolutions that the SDEA Rep. Council recently unanimously passed. Their message was clear: “Less time testing, more time teaching and learning.” The contingency also presented hundreds of signatures gathered from members at

dozens of sites who support the resolutions.

Back on Feb. 20, 2015, SDUSD unanimously passed a resolution that called for ending the federal mandate for annual testing and to promote multiple forms of evidence of student learning and school quality in accountability. Superintendent Cindy Marten even sent a letter to parents in April of 2015 that included information about the parental right to opt their children out of testing. SDEA strongly supports these actions from the School Board and Superintendent, but the message is not being heard or felt where the rubber hits the road: at school sites.

The District is still mandating interim assessments

in literacy and math as well as on-demand writing assessments that are time consuming to administer and score, and that don't align to the curriculum of many teachers. Bottom line, these time-consuming tests are still being mandated by the District, and they are taking instructional time away from our students.

In the first resolution, SDEA calls on the District to live up to their previous public statements and resolutions against high-stakes testing and the over-testing of our students by making the interim assessments optional, and to direct all principals to end test prep in advance of any interim assessments given to students. In the second resolution, SDEA

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Top: SDEA Board Treasurer Kisha Borden addresses the SDUSD Board of Trustees regarding over-testing. Above: The SDEA contingent gets ready to present our demand to the School Board to spend “less time testing, more time learning!”



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Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham
SDEA President



Michelle Sanchez
SDEA Vice President

Teacher shortage is imminent

There has been a lot in the media recently about the impending educator shortage in San Diego, California, and across the nation. SDEA President Lindsay Burningham had the opportunity to attend a symposium in Sacramento with lead researchers, policy experts, legislative staff, District staff and union leadership. They had the opportunity to learn about why we are experiencing the shortage and policy suggestions for moving forward. She had the opportunity to participate in a panel where she shared the work of the San Diego Teacher Pipeline Task Force.

This past week the San Diego Teacher Pipeline Taskforce, a collaboration between SDEA, SDUSD, community and university partners, reconvened to discuss how we can work together to expand, enhance and diversify the pipeline of qualified educators wanting to join our ranks. In San Diego we are seeing the shortage first hit in secondary math, science, bilingual education and Special Education. We are looking to develop opportunities that would incentivize our own local SDUSD students to attend a San Diego university partner, obtain their credentials, and then be guaranteed employment in our District. We had a very rich conversation with our university partners and are excited at the opportunities that lie ahead.

As current educators, we can play a role in building the pipeline of diverse and qualified educators ready to join our profession. Although at times our profession has become quite challenging, educating our city's future generation is one of the most important and rewarding professions out

there. Susan Evans, a second grade teacher at Boone Elementary, was interviewed last week by CW6 News. As an educator in SDUSD for over 30 years, she is approaching the time where she will be able to enjoy her retirement. She shared that one of the most rewarding aspects of teaching is when past students come back with their own children wanting them to be in her room so that their children can have the same amazing experience they had as students. As we talk to our students, parents and community, we must remember to stand up for our profession, make sure we have a voice in the decisions that impact our students, and encourage and mentor those who express an interest in education.

Not only do we need to make sure a pipeline of educators are ready to fill vacancies when they arise, but we also need to ensure that those qualified educators choose to come to San Diego Unified and stay here once they arrive. Every year as we approach the spring, conversations start up about the state budget, District budget and ultimately site budgets. As the conversations begin districtwide, SDEA continues to remind the School Board, Superintendent and District administration that teacher recruitment and retention must remain a top budget priority. There is no point in improving our pipeline if we don't have an attractive salary and benefits package and if we do not adequately support educators once they join our ranks.

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 we are stronger as a group so that we can do the very best things for students in our job."

— **Becky Paradise**
Adapted Physical Education Teacher



"I chose to participate in the 1996 strike because I believe in standing up for what is right. It was difficult because I was hired by the District in January and the strike started soon after. I really needed the money but chose NOT to cross the line and sub. Instead I walked with the teachers."

— **Ruth Nazarian**
Silver Gate Elem. Teacher

Contract limits IEP meetings outside work day

Odds are when you were working towards becoming an educator you were looking forward to connecting with your students and leaving a positive lifelong impression on them. If you planned a career in general education, it is also likely that you did not see yourself sitting in endless IEP meetings. We all know that IEP meetings are not only necessary, but they are also required by the law. However, as educators we have rights surrounding these meetings.

Our contract has provisions that limit the number of IEP meetings that SDEA members can be required to attend before or after school. Go and crack open your SDEA contract—you should have received a copy of the 2014-2017 contract at your school. You'll see that in Article 29, Section 29.1.5 there are rights that pertain to IEP meetings.

Many SDEA members do not know that in Section 29.1.5 of our union contract the District has agreed "to make every effort...that no more than three meetings per month extend beyond the six hour and 35 minutes on-site workday."

This is a significant right in your contract that you should exercise if you often find yourself sitting in IEP meetings before or after school. This means that our contract requires your administrator to give you the latitude to make every effort possible to schedule no more than three meetings beyond the six hour and 35 minute on-site day in any given month. Any other IEP meetings, beyond those three, must occur during the regular school day.

The law does require that IEP meetings occur when the parent is able to attend. However, that should not be automatically used to schedule all meetings before or after school. The IEP case managers should work with parents in scheduling meetings in a way that does not violate their own rights or the rights of their fellow educators. With proper scheduling this can be done!

Section 29.1.5 also requires the District "to make every effort within the limitations of state and federal law to ensure that IEP meetings [do] not occur beyond the eight-hour workday." This

**Contract
Corner**

**Strengthening
our union by
protecting our contract**

means that you should not have an IEP meeting beyond your eight-hour day if it can be avoided. In hopefully rare circumstances, you may find yourself in a scenario where, due to a parent's schedule or because of the complexity of a particular IEP, the IEP meeting ends up extending beyond the eight-hour day. If you believe a particular IEP meeting will extend or maybe even start beyond the eight-hour day, you must get "prior approval" from your administrator so that you can be compensated your pro rata rate of pay for the time beyond your eight-hour day. If your administrator does not approve such pay, you do not have to stay at the meeting

beyond your eight-hour day. If this happens, remember: Obey now, grieve later. Then see your site Association Representative ASAP!

It is a good idea to discuss a plan for how to schedule IEP meetings in a way that conforms to your contractual rights with your administrator. A first step could be to take this *Contract Corner* to your principal and use it as a conversation starter!

NOTE: Section 29.1.5 only deals with IEP meetings. Other provisions in the contract permit administrators to hold a maximum of one grade level/department meeting, one committee meeting, and one staff meeting per month.

Visiting teachers make our union strong!

Are you aware that Visiting Teachers are part of our union? In 1994, Visiting Teachers received recognition by the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) and became part of SDEA. Although their rights may be limited by the nature of being day-to-day or short-term employees, their wages and working conditions far exceed surrounding districts, and what they would be were they not unionized.

SDEA Visiting Teachers enjoy the highest daily rate of pay in the County, ranging from \$145.64 or \$154.20 for day-to-day assignments to \$162.20 for assignments exceeding 95 consecutive days.

Recent improvements that SDEA bargained for Visiting Teachers include accrual and utilization of sick leave, payment for the Mandated Reporter Training if taken after work hours, and the assurance that Visiting Teachers receive a full day's pay when working

on modified or minimum days. Visiting Teachers also received wage increases alongside regular members as part of our *Fight for 5!*, and were part of our fight all the way from our Bargaining Input Sessions to our strong contract settlement.

If you are a regular member and Visiting Teachers are working at your site, make sure that they are aware of their contractual rights and ask if they know that they can join SDEA.

Testing

Cont. from p. 1

calls on the District to inform parents of special education students of their right to opt out of the SBAC/CAA tests.

SDEA is also going to be participating in a national day of action on Feb. 17 by staging morning walk-ins at some schools that will involve parents, students and educators walking in to their school together to show our collective support for our public schools spending more time teaching and learning and less time testing!



Protect what matters to you.

When you're out of commission, you aren't just out of the classroom. You're missing out on what makes you, you. That's why it pays to protect your way of life with CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance from The Standard. It replaces part of your income to pay for the things medical insurance won't cover — like groceries, the mortgage, utility bills and more. Get the confidence that comes with knowing you've protected your future so you can focus on making the most of today. Learn more at CTAMemberBenefits.org/TheStandard.



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