

THE ADVOCATE

Unity and anger at SDEA special ed. forum

It was standing room only as hundreds of concerned SDEA members, parents and students flooded the SDEA union hall on Jan. 30 to demand an end to special education understaffing. From La Jolla to southeast San Diego, those in attendance came from all across our district. This diverse group was united around their profound agitation about the persistent understaffing in the District's special education division, and the harm this understaffing has caused educators and their students.

The power of the forum was a direct result of the organizing efforts of SDEA member leaders, both on the

SDEA Board of Directors and at school sites. These efforts led to educators from every corner of the District turning out to the forum, and sharing their dismay at the ravages that persistent understaffing had visited upon many schools and programs. It appears that the District has made a policy decision to not hire sufficient special educators to meet the caseload rules in the SDEA contract. As a result, there are over 20 active special education caseload grievances, with a class action grievance being filed last week.

Due to this insufficient staffing, students' IEP goals often require enormous effort on



More than 250 educators pack the SDEA union hall to demand an end to Special Education understaffing.

the part of the teachers who have to meet them. And, sometimes because of the pervasiveness of the staffing shortage, the IEP goals are just left unmet.

SDEA's special education members were joined by their

general education brothers and sisters in sharing their frustrations with the special education understaffing problem in the district. For example, Trace Cimins, an SDEA Board member, was joined by their

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SDEA members fight back furlough proposal

Despite an increasingly positive education funding forecast statewide, in late January the SDUSD School Board was poised to "sunshine" a proposal to cut our pay in the form of furlough days starting next year. The proposal was insulting and goes against the grain of what's happening everywhere else in the state.

SDEA members swung into action. Despite last-minute notice, scores of SDEA members waited at the Board meeting until 9:00 p.m. to share their anger over the proposed cuts. In

response, the Board backtracked.

The Board approved a verbal amendment to the motion to open up our contract language around work days in the upcoming reopener bargaining. The approved verbal motion called on the District to "sunshine a proposal to negotiate with our bargaining units about how do we pull together as a community to get the resources into our schools that we need." It is unclear at this point exactly what this verbal motion means; however, it appears that the

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SDEA President Kisha Borden addresses the delegation of SDEA members who came to "sunshine" our spring bargaining fight for fair, competitive wages and safer schools.



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Letters in Solidarity

Kisha Borden
SDEA President



Scott Mullin
SDEA Vice President

What UTLA's strike win means for us

After six days on the picket lines, LA's educators have some huge wins to celebrate. One victory that stands out is the increase to nurse and counselor staffing. LAUSD will hire at least 300 additional nurses in the next two years to guarantee a nurse at every school, five days a week. Plus, their counselor ratios have been reduced from 1:1000+ down to 1:500. They also made big progress in class size. English and math classes at the secondary level will be reduced by seven students, bringing the class size cap to 39.

Another huge win for public education in LA was the cap on additional charters that was passed by the LAUSD School Board at their first meeting after the end of the strike. This is significant, in that unregulated charter growth costs LAUSD upwards of \$600 million every year.

Thankfully, we don't have those sorts of factors in place at SDUSD—for now. Also, our contract already has protections that UTLA was fighting for—like better secondary class size caps and student-to-counselor ratios. However, that isn't to say that we do not have disputes with SDUSD. We saw that at the last SDUSD School Board meeting when SDUSD's initial bargaining proposal called for a reduced work year, despite the increased spending for education in the Governor's proposed budget. We see that in the current fight around special education understaffing. In fact, we have gone to impasse in our last two rounds of bargaining with SDUSD.

Hopefully SDUSD will deal with us fairly when we begin bargaining in the next month. No union wishes to go on strike. It is something that is always forced on them by bad employer behavior. If



SDEA President Kisha Borden and Executive Director Abdul Sayid standing in solidarity with striking UTLA educators!

SDUSD deals with its employees, our members, in a fair manner then there is no opening for a strike. But that is up to them. Whatever happens, we will stand strong together. There is power in our numbers. Together we are stronger!

Kisha Borden
SDEA President

Scott Mullin
SDEA Vice President

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 the SDEA office 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.

SPED: Understaffing must stop!

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Member and Kindergarten teacher at Hancock Elementary, shared that the level of staffing allocated to her school was just not sufficient to meet the combined IEP needs of the students in that school's community.

In attendance to hear the community's concerns was the District Chief of Staff Staci Monreal, as well as representatives from the SDUSD Human Resources and Special Education Departments. The crowd was passionate, loud and persistent in telling Monreal that SDUSD

must hire sufficient special education staff to meet the needs of our students with disabilities. In response to the crowd's specific demand, Monreal vaguely said she was "committed to more support for special education" Kisha Borden, SDEA President and Zamorano Elementary teacher, told Monreal that until SDUSD stops understaffing and hires more special education staff, "We won't give up or back down."

SDEA will continue to organize around special education until concrete changes are made!

Sunshine: The furlough fight

Continued from p. 1

District no longer intends to open contract language that would reduce our work year.

No matter what happens next, we will still have an uphill fight on our hands to win the fair raise we deserve next year. If SDEA members stand united behind our proposals for fair pay and safer schools, we will win!

Already, this early bargaining fight shows the power of the union difference. Without a union, the District could have simply implemented up to

four furlough days—which would have been our four prep days, since our school year is already at the 180-day minimum. For a new teacher on Step and Column One of the pay scale, four furlough days would have decreased your pay by \$967 next year. For a teacher at the top of the schedule, four furlough days would have decreased your annual pay by \$1,924! **That** is why union membership matters.

Stay tuned for more updates as bargaining begins later this winter.

SDEA Scholarships

The deadline to apply for SDEA dependent and member scholarships is Friday, May 3 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.



STAND UP AND BOOST YOUR HEART HEALTH

On average, adults spend six to eight hours each day being sedentary. All that sitting down can harm your heart. Experts recommend moving around every hour for five minutes. Here's how:

- ♥ Stand when talking on the phone.
- ♥ Walk at lunchtime or during breaks.
- ♥ Opt to take the stairs instead of the elevator.
- ♥ Have standing or walking meetings with colleagues.
- ♥ Sneak in some activity while watching TV. Stretch, pedal on an exercise bike or use hand weights.

Visit VEBAonline.com for more tips on keeping your heart healthy.



UHC Alliance members: Through the Scripps/VEBA partnership, the leading heart care in San Diego is available to you. Why choose Scripps?

- ♥ *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Scripps the best in San Diego for cardiology and heart surgery.
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- ♥ The Prebys Cardiovascular Institute is the West Coast's largest cardiac center.

Learn more at scripps.org or call 800-727-4777 to find a heart specialist right for you.



Coming in March 2019 Special Enrollment Opportunity for CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance

From March 1 through April 30, 2019, San Diego Education Association members will have an exclusive opportunity to apply for the CTA-endorsed Disability and Life Insurance plans provided by Standard Insurance Company (The Standard) with **no health questions asked**. To learn more:

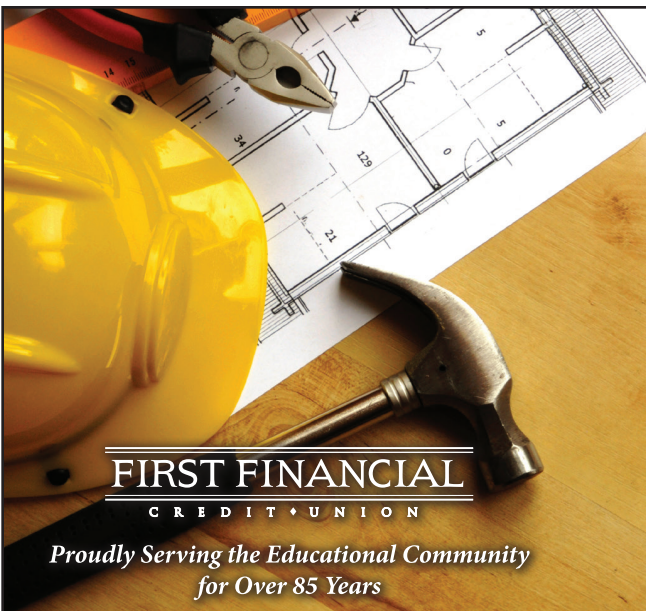
- Attend an enrollment meeting (ask your Site Rep for details)
- Watch your home mailbox in March for the announcement postcard

Call The Standard at 800.522.0406 (TTY), 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday – Friday with any 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 GP190-LTD/S399/CTA.1 GP190-LIFE/S399/CTA3 SI 16480-CTAvol



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