

THE ADVOCATE

SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

KNOX EDUCATORS FIGHTING FOR COPIER ACCESS

Like at many schools, SDEA members at Knox Middle School regularly find a traffic jam and line at the school's copy machines.

At Knox, a late start school, this is compounded by the copy room being locked when the office closes every afternoon, leaving a rush for the nearly 40 educators at the school to prepare all their materials at the same time. Many teachers at the school also volunteer to supervise afterschool clubs and student activities, further limiting access to the copy room immediately after the final bell.

"It's important to have access to our copy room because I often work long hours as an ASB adviser, as well as classroom teacher," said Michelle Hesse, an eighth-grade history teacher and Knox's Association Representative. "I work before and after school in order to prepare for engaging lessons in my room, while also preparing all the events around campus, which takes an enormous amount of prep time. In order to do my job effectively I need time and an area to work in that is congruent to the long hours I put in at my school."

At October's SDEA Union Academy, Hesse and Alternate Lori Cruz learned about newly won contractual rights that guarantee educators keys and access to their classrooms and workspaces.

Section 11.4.3, which is located under the "Supplies and Equipment" subsection of the contract's Safety

article, reads, "*All unit members shall be provided all external gate keys at the worksite(s), and the building keys necessary to allow entry and exit to and from their workspace(s).*"

Hesse and Cruz then held a union meeting at their school to discuss how filing a unionwide grievance to enforce these rights could help resolve the issue and give all educators regular access to the copy room.

Early in the grievance process, after administration objected to giving all SDEA members access to the school's entire office, educators regrouped and came up with multiple alternative solutions. This included re-keying only the external door to the copy room, leaving the rest of the office still secured, and moving one of the school's two copies to other areas on campus.

Administration rejected all proposed solutions, stating in their step two grievance response that educators do not have a right to access the copy room. The District's Labor Relations Department expressed a similar view at step three of the grievance process, stating that the new contract language only guarantees keys and access to an educator's personal classroom or office.

The fight to access the copy room at Knox is another example of the District not respecting the work and rights of educators, and SDEA members at Knox will continue the grievance until given access.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

EXCESSING = REDUCTION IN STAFF

Excessing is a type of involuntary transfer made to reduce staff due to declining enrollment or loss of funding at the site or in a program. The term in the union contract is "transfer to reduce staff," but we often say "excessed." Being excessed is a form of transfer; it's not the same as being laid off.

EXCESSING IS BASED ON SENIORITY

Instead of allowing the supervisor to play favorites, the union contract establishes rules about who is to be transferred should there be a need to transfer to reduce staff. Here are the steps:

1. The supervisor determines, based on enrollment, the level (TK-3 or 4-6), subject area, or program to be reduced.
2. At an elementary, the supervisor must ask members about interest in changing levels (TK-3 or 4-6).
3. The supervisor must ask for volunteers to achieve the desired reduction in staff.

4. If there is no volunteer, the member with the least seniority at the level, in the subject area, or in the affected program is to be transferred.

EXERCISING SENIORITY RIGHTS TO STAY

The member to be transferred may be able to exercise seniority rights to stay at the site. To do so, they must meet two requirements:

RECENT EXPERIENCE

Have taught in SDUSD in a different subject, level, or program for at least two school years in the last nine, or one school year in the last five.

SENIORITY

Be more senior than another member who works in the subject, level, or program in which they wish to exercise seniority rights.

Only the member who is slated for excessing can decide if they want to exercise seniority rights (if eligible) to stay. The supervisor can't exercise seniority rights for them.

SOURCE: SDEA UNION CONTRACT, SECTION 12.7.3. AVAILABLE ONLINE AT SDEA.NET



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LETTERS IN SOLIDARITY

In early December, SDEA members across the District took part in an unprecedented action. Members at nearly 130 sites and programs reviewed and discussed our proposed bargaining platform before holding a secret ballot vote to support or reject the platform.

SDEA members voted overwhelmingly to support the SDEA bargaining platform for contract bargaining that starts in January. 99.3% of the nearly 3000 members who voted said yes to:

MAKE SPECIAL EDUCATION WORK

Schools need the resources to educate all of our students, including moderate/severe caseload limits and enough staff to meet IEP requirements.

MORE COUNSELORS & NURSES—NO CUTS TO PSYCHOLOGISTS

Classrooms will be safer for our students and we can curb behavior issues with more counselors and nurses, and no cuts to psychologists.

SMALLER ELEMENTARY CLASS SIZE

In 2012, SDEA members won the lowest secondary class size limit of large, urban school districts in California. Now it's time to do the same for elementary.

DEFEND THE TEACHING PROFESSION

There's a nationwide shortage of teachers. We need competitive pay and fully-paid family healthcare benefits to attract the best and brightest to our profession – and to keep us.

RESPECT EDUCATORS' RIGHTS

When SDUSD doesn't respect our rights, it hurts not just educators, but our schools, too. We demand that Superintendent Marten and her administration respect our rights, resolve grievances, and stop unfair labor practices.

FUND OUR FUTURE

California is the richest state in the nation but ranks 41st in per student funding. The money is here to fund our future. Funding public education needs to be a priority.

This platform is based on bargaining input sessions conducted by member leaders, just like you, at most schools in 2019.

Because of this vote, when we sit down at the bargaining table this month, Superintendent Marten's team will know that these aren't just the demands of a handful of union members on the bargaining team. Instead, they'll know that these are the demands of our whole union. SDEA members will have to fight hard if we want to win big changes, and this is exactly the right way to start!

The new round of bargaining, for our next contract, will begin on January 23, 2020.

Congratulations to all of the ARs and member leaders who made bargaining input sessions and this bargaining vote happen at your schools. You make your union strong!

KISHA BORDEN
SDEA PRESIDENT

SCOTT MULLIN
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

SIGN THE PETITION FOR SCHOOL FUNDING

Most of us want similar things: good schools for our children, a healthy family, and safe neighborhoods. But for nearly four decades, big corporations have not been paying their fair share, leaving California with the most overcrowded classrooms in the US and with some of the worst ratios of counselors, librarians, and nurses per student.

In January, SDEA members are kicking off a signature gathering campaign to change that. Along with other labor and community groups, SDEA members are collecting signatures for the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative. It closes commercial property tax loopholes benefiting a fraction of corporations and wealthy investors, without affecting homeowners or renters, reclaiming \$12 billion every year to fund schools and strengthen local economies.

With Schools and Communities First, San Diego

Unified stands to reclaim \$45 million every year to fund our schools. *What could an extra \$45 million buy for San Diego Unified?*

- About 475 teachers, or
- A full-time nurse and full-time counselor in every school, or
- About 900 paraeducators, or
- A 7.5% raise for educators

Think for a moment about the spending that is most important to you. What would you like to see changed?

To qualify for the 2020 ballot, we need to collect 1.6 million signatures from registered voters statewide. SDEA is committed to gathering 3,700 signatures. You can join the effort by talking to your school's AR about signing on and helping collect signatures from co-workers, friends and family.

What type of insurance helps protect you and your family, now and in the future?



Family Coverage

Financial Planning

Online Tools & Resources

Life Insurance

Customized Choices

Included AD&D Coverage

Identity Theft Prevention

As a California educator, it's part of your job to prepare others for the future. It's just as important for you to prepare for your own. The CTA-endorsed Life Insurance plan from **The Standard** includes extra benefits and resources that you and your loved ones can utilize now, and in the future – at no additional cost.

Visit us at CTAMemberBenefits.org/Life to learn more.

Enrolling is easy!

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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 The Standard's dedicated CTA Customer Service Department at 800.522.0406 (TTY), 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Pacific Time, Monday through Friday. Standard Insurance Company, 1100 SW Sixth Avenue, Portland, OR 97204 GP190-LIFE/S399/CTA.3 SI 19298-CTAvol (9/17)



CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS
VEBA

Start the New Year the SMART Way

Did you know that more than 50% of Americans abandon their New Year's resolutions within the first two weeks? Make 2020 your healthiest year by trying the SMART system of setting a goal:

- 1 **Specific.** Break your goal down into smaller steps such as a particular activity for an exact amount of time.
- 2 **Measurable.** How will action toward the goal be measured? This helps you see progress and stay motivated.
- 3 **Achievable.** Set yourself up for success by choosing an attainable goal.
- 4 **Realistic.** Is the goal relevant to your overall lifestyle ambitions? Are you likely to work hard to accomplish the goal?
- 5 **Time-bound.** A specific timeframe to complete the goal.

For instance, a SMART fitness goal would be "I will walk for at least 15 minutes every day this week."

Looking for some help with your well-being goals? The VEBA Resource Center offers free programs and services, such as fitness training, nutrition classes, health education and counseling, to all VEBA members. Try out our Healthy Reboot for a sampler of all of our programs. Visit vebresourcecenter.com to learn more.

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