

THE ADVOCATE

Strong ratification caps off year of organizing

The votes are in! All 4,485 of them! In the highest-participation vote SDEA has held in years, 96% of members voted to ratify our new contract.

All of the new benefits and protections of our new contract are in full effect—our raises, fully-paid family health benefits, maternity leave, expanded personal leave, stronger transfer rights and so much more that we fought for and won together.

We ended this contract campaign the way we began it: with widespread union member participation at almost every single school. Votes were held at more than 160 worksites. The vote wasn't just about this contract. It was about building our power at a crucial time for our union as we await the

anti-union *Janus v. AFSCME* Supreme Court decision.

“There was a lot of energy around this vote,” said Election Committee Co-Chair Taylor Golia of Euclid Elem. “Many members talked about how important the union is, and why it’s so important to commit to staying a part of the union after the decision. A lot of teachers had the ‘a ha’ moment of how terrible it would be if we didn’t have a union and a collective voice.”

Roughly 4,000 SDEA members and counting have completed recommitment forms. SDEA members are sending a clear message to our District and those who would attack public unions and public education this year: SDEA members are union strong and union proud!



SDEA members of the Election Committee and ballot count volunteers spent hours counting nearly 4,500 ratification ballots to help drive our membership recommitment campaign!

The attacks have started: SDEA targeted

As of last week, our union is being directly targeted by the anti-union, anti-public education “Freedom” Foundation. They are sending emails encouraging members to opt out of union dues. **This is a direct attack designed to make our union weaker and make it easier to privatize our public schools.**

The emails are being sent to SDEA member District emails from an address that appears as “Opt Out Today.” Opt Out

Today is part of the “Freedom” Foundation. This foundation has been accurately characterized in recent media reports as “door-to-door union-killers.” They are corporate-funded lobbyists who support privatization of public schools. If you received this email, know that it is part of a campaign by a known anti-union group designed to weaken our union, and it is happening statewide and across the West Coast. These people are not our

friends, and they are no friends of public education.

Opting out of the portion of union dues that supports political activity will simply make it easier for privatization groups like the “Freedom” Foundation to elect politicians who want to weaken our unions and pave the way for charter expansion. Their campaign is cynical, it is anti-worker, and it is anti-student.

Three Steps to Fighting Back:

ONE: Mark the email spam.

TWO: Talk about this article with every educator you know.

THREE: Make sure you have completed an SDEA union membership recommitment form. Roughly 4,000 SDEA members have already recommitted to our union by filling out our new form. If you haven’t yet, *now is the time*. These attacks are going to continue. Let’s stand union-strong and send a strong signal to these privatizers: **NOT ON OUR WATCH.**



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Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham
SDEA President

Kisha Borden
SDEA Vice President



It has truly been an honor

It sure has been a whirlwind of four years as president of SDEA. I have been honored to serve the educators and students of San Diego in this role and want to thank all of you for your support!

It has not been an easy four years as we have fought back layoffs, had some challenging bargaining campaigns and faced attacks on public education at the state and national level. Together we have stayed stronger, and together we have overcome each one of these challenges thrown our way.

There have also been many accomplishments throughout these four years as we have won regular salary increases for our members, bargained strong contracts with groundbreaking language, fought to increase school funding and have maintained a School Board that supports public education. These wins would not have been possible without all of the dedicated and hard-working SDEA members stepping up and standing strong!

Although we have had many accomplishments in recent years, the fights are not over. We continue to face declining enrollment, which results in declining resources for our schools, students and educators. We continue to face attacks on public education at the local, state and national level. We will continue to overcome these challenges as a strong and united SDEA.

I am excited to return to the classroom next year and know that I am passing on the reigns to

I welcome the challenges ahead!

First of all, I would like to thank everyone who participated in the Spring Election. Even though I ran uncontested, it's important for all members to be involved in the process.

The end of this school year is bittersweet for me. I am packing up my classroom and leaving Zamorano, my second home for the last 22 years. However, I am embarking on a new journey as your President. I know the next two years will be full of challenges and triumphs. The attacks from the anti-union privatizers have begun. But we knew they were coming and we were prepared for this first attack. I know that with everyone standing strong and staying informed, we will continue to stay



New SDEA Board Officers: President Kisha Borden, Vice President Scott Mullin, Treasurer Adam Goldstein and Secretary Sara Holerud.

an amazing leader in your President-Elect, Kisha Borden, and her dedicated and passionate team! We have also chosen an amazing SDEA Executive Director, Abdul Sayid. Abdul has been with SDEA for 10 years and is a graduate of San Diego Unified Schools. He knows our union, knows our schools and knows what it will take to support SDEA leaders and members as we take on the battles ahead.

Continue to stay involved, stay united and stay strong!

Together WE ARE Stronger, *Lindsay Burningham*

Lindsay Burningham
SDEA President

several steps ahead of those whose goal is to destroy public education.

I hope to see SDEA become more of a resource to educators. I hope to offer educators more ways to become involved in our union. I want to create space for those who may not have felt there was a place for them in our Association in the past.

I have learned so much from our past leaders. I hope to continue moving SDEA forward as a union that fights for its members, supports our students, and stands with our parents and communities.

Kisha Borden
Kisha Borden
SDEA President-Elect

Low-income students lose when charters expand

In the Public Interest is a comprehensive research and policy center committed to promoting the values, vision and agenda for the common good and democratic control of public goods and services. In a first-of-its-kind analysis, In The Public Interest has found that public school students in three California school districts are bearing the cost of the unchecked expansion of privately managed charter schools.

Over the last two decades, the number of California charter schools increased by more than 900 percent to more than 1,200 schools. For San Diego Unified, the annual cost of charter schools is \$65.9 million, which means \$620 less in funding for every neighborhood school student. When a student leaves a neighborhood school for a charter school, all the funding for that student leaves

with them, but all the costs do not. This leads to cuts in core services like counseling, libraries and special education, and increased class sizes at neighborhood public schools.

With \$65.9 million a year, the district could lower class sizes, hire more staff, and invest in our students. But this isn't just a San Diego issue. **The costs of unlimited charter school expansion is becoming a statewide crisis.**

■ California ranks 42nd nationwide in state per pupil funding, and it has 1,200 charter schools, more than any other state.

■ In the Public Interest found that charter schools cost Oakland Unified School District \$57 million every year. OUSD was recently forced to make \$9 million in cuts to core services.

■ Charter schools are costing San Jose's East Side

Union High School District almost \$20 million per year.

"Our analysis found that, like many school districts across the state, the continued expansion of charter schools has taken a toll on the budget of San Diego Unified," said Dr. Gordon Lafer, a political scientist and professor at the University of Oregon. "The high cost of supporting a separate charter school system makes it more difficult for the district to fund key goals like smaller class sizes and support services for low-income students."

Low-income students are particularly vulnerable when districts lose funding. While parent foundations at wealthier schools can help close funding gaps, struggling families can't. Those children just lose out.

The California Charter Schools Act does not allow school boards to consider how

a charter school may impact a district's educational programs or fiscal health when weighing new charter applications. "Our elected school board should have the right to determine the future for our community," said Superintendent Cindy Marten. "We want local control and the ability to choose a better future for our city and the students we serve. Only with robust local control and true accountability will our children continue to thrive in San Diego."

As we work to address the challenge of declining enrollment and fight for a greater investment in our schools and communities, it's crystal clear that we need to address the impact of charter schools. As SDEA members, this is an important part of our fight to reclaim our schools and protect public education.

Learn more at the website HowMuchChartersCost.Org.

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Ruling weakens worker protections

Last month, the Supreme Court delivered a blow to non-union, private sector workers. In *Epic Systems*, the Court ruled that workers can no longer band together to challenge violations of federal labor laws if they've signed arbitration agreements.

As with teachers in West Virginia and Arizona, it's when we band together that we have power to take on well-resourced employers. Could just one teacher walking out in Arizona have succeeded on her own? Surely not. The workers who brought these cases knew that. They argued that workers need to band together to bring claims because the amounts they could win in individual lawsuits were dwarfed by legal fees. Fees for one plaintiff who sought a class action arbitration cost \$200,000, but the amount she could recover for unpaid

overtime was only \$1,800.

This decision means employers have the green light to require non-union workers, as a condition of employment, to sign arbitration agreements. Then employees won't be able to afford to bring claims over unpaid wages, family medical leave violations and discrimination. If private sector employees want to keep their rights under federal labor law, it's time to unionize.

This month the Court will rule on *Janus*, a case bankrolled by billionaires in order to weaken public service unions. For teachers and other public service workers, it will likely overturn fair share, the idea that all who enjoy the benefits and protections of the union contract should pay to maintain it—another blow designed to weaken worker rights.

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4 WAYS TO PREPARE FOR SUMMER

Summer is finally here! Make sure you stay healthy so you can enjoy all the fun. These tips can keep your summer living easy and safe:

- 1. Slather on some sunscreen!** Choose a sunscreen with at least SPF 15 and reapply after two hours in the sun and post-swimming or toweling off.
- 2. Drink up!** Whenever you're out in the summer sun, be sure to drink lots of water to avoid dehydration. Aim to drink at least two liters of water a day.
- 3. Hitting the road this summer?** Make sure everyone in the family gets adequate sleep before and during the trip, schedule frequent rest breaks, pack healthy snacks, and bring activity options to keep little ones entertained.
- 4. Watch out for warning signs of heat-related illness!** Symptoms include muscle spasms, headaches, dizziness, exhaustion and heavy sweating. Rest in a cool, shaded place and drink water or non-caffeinated, non-alcoholic beverages. Immediate medical attention is needed for vomiting, pale skin, loss of consciousness and increased blood pressure or pulse.

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