

THE ADVOCATE

Educators, parents rally for fair contract

SDEA members kicked off a wave of rolling school-based rallies on Feb. 12, demanding that the School Board and Superintendent send their bargaining team to the table to settle a fair *Fight for 5!* contract NOW. Since Feb. 12, we have been averaging two rallies day!

It's not just union members who are fed up with the District's ten-month delay. Parents and community members are standing with us in calling on the School Board to start putting

the Prop. 30 money where it belongs: in the classroom. When parents hear that the District is taking their tax dollars and giving central office administrators double-digit raises while refusing to lower class sizes in grades 4-12, they get pretty angry. And they're willing to stand with us and do something about it.

We will be keeping the pressure on until we get the fair contract educators and students deserve. See your site AR to get a rally going at your school!



Top: Parents, educators and students at Horton Elementary kicked off the wave of rolling rallies on Feb. 12, taking full advantage of construction in front of the school to share the *Fight for 5!* with a captive audience. **Bottom left:** Joined by members from San Diego HS, Garfield HS and ALBA, educators, parents and students from Birney Elementary marched next door to the District Office to make some serious noise below the window where the School Board was meeting in closed session. Ralliers then marched through the hallways, chanting with bullhorns and waving signs, making sure the School Board heard them loud and clear: Fair contract NOW! **Bottom right:** Members at San Diego HS rallied in front of school before marching up Park Blvd. to stand on the bridge over the 5 to make sure the public knows about our *Fight for 5!*



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We deserve some R-E-S-P-E-C-T

It has been a powerful experience getting out to dozens of sites and participating in many rallies over the last few months. During this time, SDEA leadership and staff have been able to listen to and talk with hundreds of educators. What we heard loud and clear is that our educators are feeling disrespected, and now is the time for the Superintendent and School Board to show our members the respect we truly deserve!

SDEA members do not feel valued for our work, evidenced by SDUSD's position at the bargaining table. The District's low salary offer would keep our wages below median and drop our comparability further as compared to educators across San Diego and the state, as other districts continue to reach multi-year settlements with increases. We can't afford to fall further behind!

Salary is just one of many areas where our members are feeling a lack of respect. Our teachers, nurses, counselors and other support providers are constantly having more and more expected out of

them without enough time in their day to complete everything on their plates. We have seen huge increases in paperwork for special education providers in order to be compliant with state law, yet no time being provided to complete the documentation. Members have expressed huge concerns on the number of state and District mandated assessments and the amount of valuable instructional time being taken away from our students. SDEA members feel that our time is not being respected, and students' valuable learning time is diminishing by assessments that are neither aligned to instruction nor reliable.

Since Feb. 12, schools across the District have held rallies to bring attention to these issues and the rest of the *Fight for 5!* If your school has yet to schedule a rally, please contact your AR to schedule an organizing meeting as soon as possible.

Lindsay Burningham
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SDEA President

Michelle Sanchez
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SDEA Vice President

Using comparability as a 'measuring stick'

Back in March 2014 SDEA made our initial "sunshine" bargaining proposal public to the School Board, setting the stage for our *Fight for 5!* campaign to rebuild public schools. One of the core *Fight for 5!* goals set by SDEA members was to increase wages to the median or higher compared to other county and state districts, in order to attract and retain the highest quality educators.

A frequently asked question is, "How do you calculate a percent salary increase that will actually move us to the median and beyond?" The first step is to determine which districts to use for a comparability study. For SDUSD, we look at the largest county and state districts that are similar in how they receive education funding. Next, we review the comparable districts' educator salary schedules and analyze at certain benchmarks. For example, standard benchmarks are beginning teacher salaries, five years with a BA + 45 units, ten years with a MA, and maximum earnable salary. Using each of these benchmarks, salaries for SDEA unit members are currently below median.

Finally, we determine what percent increase is needed to move the salary schedule to at least median. As comparable settlements are reached between other unions and their employers, the percentage to move can change, but usually not greatly enough to substantially alter the needed percent increase.

SDEA's current wage proposal of 8% over two years will move us beyond median, while the District's proposal of 2% over three years would do nothing to move salaries closer median. In fact, it would move us backwards, even further towards the bottom!

Not only does the District's proposal show a great deal of disrespect to San Diego's educators, it is absolutely not in the best interest of our students. As detailed in the February issue of *The Advocate*, SDUSD is on the brink of a major teacher shortage, at the same time that statewide enrollment in teacher credentialing programs is down **53%**! If SDUSD wants to have a qualified teacher in every classroom, which is what our students deserve, they need to pay educators competetively.

MTM educators digging into parent engagement

For three hours after school, Millennial Tech Middle School (MTM) SDEA members and school staff participated in a training on parent teacher home visits. Developed between parents and Sacramento teachers, MTM members learned a model that is being used in 17 states and tens of thousands of home visits per year. The idea is pretty simple. Rather than allowing parents and educators to be divided, we come together as equal partners to build trust and form a relationship. This relationship allows us to work as partners on behalf of the student. Schools using this model have found:

- Increased attendance.
- Decreased behavior

problems.

- Increased success on standardized test.
- Increased support and participation of families in schools.
- Increased capacity for teachers and school staff.

MTM staff were deeply engaged in the training and are fired up about building bridges with parents in a school cluster where students and community members face many challenges.

“The teacher home visit project is going to give teachers, parents, and students a chance to learn more about each other while bridging cultural gaps between our students, parents, and staff,” said MTM member Patrick Schoettler. “It is also



MTM members gear up for parent home visits.

going to give us the tools to recruit parent leaders at a school where we are starved for parental support.”

MTM AR Ann Bowen added, “The Home Visit Project offers exciting possibilities for making real connections with the families of the students we

see everyday. Being able to join hands, share information and expand trust can only enhance the middle school experience for everyone involved. This taps straight into why I became a teacher in the first place; I want to be a part of making a difference.”

CTA IFT Grant Program

CTA Institute for Teaching (IFT) Grants are intended for CTA members and Associations to support educator-led change for students and public schools. Combating the corporate reform attacks and privatization of our schools means we have to take responsibility for our profession. For too long corporations and billionaires who know nothing about the classroom have funded reform efforts that have not only failed but have left our school communities divided and underfunded. IFT grants have been used to support programs like parent-teacher home visits and school gardens in communities where access to fresh food is limited. Grants will be awarded in amounts up to \$20,000. Project implementation will be in the

2015-16 school year.

The IFT Grant cycle is open now and the deadline for your application is April 30, 2015. The grant application information is available online at www.teacherdrivenchange.org. The application must include a signature page, as well as a timeline and proposed budget. **Your application must be submitted by April 30, 2015.**

Three things SDEA/CTA members should know about applying for an IFT Grant:

1. All CTA members are eligible to apply for a grant.
2. The program is competitive. Grants are evaluated by CTA members from around the state.
3. Grant funds are mailed in late July/early August for use in the upcoming school year.

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SDEA Elections

Voting for SDEA Board of Directors, SDEA delegates to CTA's State Council, and SDEA delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly will take place March 24-April 6. Voting will be online with an in-person option. You can submit or change your email address at www.sdeaemail.com. Members who do not have an email address on file, or who wish to vote with a paper ballot, can pick up a paper ballot at the SDEA office between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. during the voting window.



Protect what matters to you.

You do a lot of things for a lot of people. But while your students count on you to teach, your family depends on you for just about everything else. That's why it pays to protect their way of life with CTA-endorsed Life Insurance from The Standard. It can help pay for the things your loved ones might need in the event of the unexpected — like car payments, college tuition, the mortgage and more. Get the confidence that comes with knowing you've protected their future so you can focus on being your best today. Learn more at CTAMemberBenefits.org/TheStandard.



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