

# THE ADVOCATE

## Let's keep the Town Hall momentum going!

In a powerful showing of solidarity and strength, nearly 700 SDEA members, parents and students came out to three School Board Town Halls to demand that our elected leaders do the right thing NOW. 350 came on May 1 alone to hold Superintendent Cindy Marten to account for her bad decisions!

One after another, we stood up and called on all five School Board members and Marten to immediately stop their harmful and unnecessary layoffs and cuts to schools, and instead support SDEA members' L.E.A.R.N.! campaign to win the resources our students need to succeed. Parents spoke of the devastation their students with special needs would experience if 250 special educators are cut. Students, in tears, described their sense of panic at the thought of losing beloved teachers—and one even

called on the Superintendent to resign, to a wave of cheers. Educators spoke passionately about low class size, enrichment programs, and the need for stable schools. All of these are things we are fighting for in our L.E.A.R.N.! campaign, and all of them require an immediate end to Marten and the Board's layoffs.

Marten and the Board members clearly felt the heat, visibly uncomfortable as they dodged or partially answered our questions. Attendees ranked their responses on Accountability Reports, and the results are overwhelming: Unacceptable.

That means we must carry our momentum forward to the May 11 School Board meeting and beyond! Even if every layoff is rescinded, we have a fight on our hands in winning a L.E.A.R.N.! contract that will keep our schools strong!



Top: Valencia Park AR Theona Shields demanded commitment to recall layoffs while members from her site stood in solidarity with her. Center right: Benchley Weinberger was one of many schools that showed up big for the Town Halls. Above: Hundreds of members, parents and students packed the SDEA union hall and spilled out of the building to hold our elected officials accountable!



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## Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA President

Kisha Borden  
SDEA Vice President



## SDEA members flex our muscles!

It is crazy to think that there is just over a month left in the traditional school year, and just over two months left for year-round educators! SDEA members have accomplished a lot, but there is still much more to do before summer break.

Hundreds of SDEA unit members, parents, students and community members attended our three Town Hall meetings. During these meetings our elected School Board members and the Superintendent heard from their constituents. Each person who stood up and told their story, put a face to the devastation that will come to pass, due to the ill-informed decisions the district has made. These stories covered concerns with special education, elementary enrichment, the destabilization caused by layoffs and many more. Our members and community partners also asked the tough questions and continued asking until we received an answer.

On Monday, May 1 hundreds of SDEA members and community allies participated in a state and national day of action. The morning started off with school site leaflets and rallies. Next, members attended the May Day March and Rally to stand in solidarity to protect immigrant and worker rights. Finally, our Day of Action culminated with our largest Town hall Meeting turnout. The auditorium was filled and attendees spilled out the doors!

The pressure from SDEA unit members and our parent/community partners is working! The District has currently decided to back off on their plan to eliminate elementary enrichment/prep time for the 2017-18 school year. SDEA members are returning to their positions and school communities as well as being recalled from the layoff lists. However, the SDEA bargaining team anticipates that the District may still seek cuts to enrichment and preparation time for future years, so we must remain ready to defend and expand this crucial program.

SDEA members also fought hard for a SERP (retirement incentive) to acknowledge the hard work of our veteran educators. More than 500 SDEA unit members took the SERP, and this is resulting in hundreds of additional members being recalled from the layoff list. Our fight will not stop until every layoff notice is rescinded!

As we are winning this layoff battle, our



Rodriguez members Kristen XXX and Janelle Small came to a Town Hall to say NO to layoffs!

energy must also be directed toward winning the L.E.A.R.N.! contract our students and educators deserve. Our L.E.A.R.N.! campaign calls for Lower class sizes and caseloads, Expanded enrichment opportunities for students, Attracting and retaining the best and brightest educators, Resources for our students and **No** destabilizing cuts at our schools.

On April 27 we had our first bargaining session, and your SDEA bargaining team started off bargaining with a strong Article 8: Hours proposal that doubles elementary enrichment/prep, protects secondary prep, acknowledges the extra work done by our nurses and counselors, and more.

Our next action is on May 11 from 3:30-5:30 p.m. at the District Office. On this day we will be having our SDEA Day of the Educator party celebrating the amazing work of our educators (food, music and fun), and also packing the school board special meeting as they vote on whether or not to issue final layoff notices.

We must continue to keep the pressure on the School Board and Superintendent, so we hope to see you all there!

Together WE ARE Stronger!

*Lindsay Burningham*  
Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA President

*Kisha Borden*  
Kisha Borden  
SDEA Vice President

# Live and L.E.A.R.N.! Our kids need Enrichment!

This spring the District made it widely-known that they would like to eliminate the Elementary Enrichment and Preparation Time Program in its entirety. The program currently guarantees elementary students at least 45 minutes to an hour of enrichment classes, with a content expert providing instruction to students and preparation time for elementary school educators.

Members and parents have fought back against this plan through grievances and organizing, and already our hard work has begun to pay off. On April 27 the District stopped attempts to eliminate the program for the 2017-18 school year—although the SDEA bargaining team anticipates

that the District is still likely to propose cutting the program for the following year.

If the District once again proposes cutting the Elementary Enrichment and Preparation Time Program, they will have an uphill fight on their hands! SDEA members aren't content with just keeping the program as it currently exists. As part of the L.E.A.R.N.! union contract campaign, SDEA is fighting to **expand** the program, giving students **more** time for enrichment through a content expert, and **more** time for elementary educators to prepare and plan for their students.

The Elementary Enrichment and Preparation Time Program is unique to SDEA members, and is

the only way to guarantee that elementary students get enrichment opportunities through a credentialed content expert in fields such as art, science, computers and technology, music and PE. The program began in the early 1990s, when educators gave up salary increases to provide the program. Reduction or elimination of the program not only takes enrichment opportunities away from students, but also ignores nearly three decades of SDEA members' sacrifice for their students.

"The Prep Time program was intended not only as a means of giving teachers a prep time, but also as enrichment for students," says Kimberly



**Vista Grande AR/Enrichment Teacher Kimberly Allard**

Allard, Science Enrichment Teacher and AR at Vista Grande Elementary. "It was not intended to take the place of the multiple subject teacher, but to provide a content expert that could deepen a student's experience in that area beyond what might be offered in the regular classroom."

## Know your evaluation rights: Five-years and more!

There are several important rights SDEA members need to know about when it comes to evaluations.

### Five-Year Evaluations

One recent win for SDEA members, through contract bargaining, has been the right to be evaluated on a five-year cycle. In order to request a five-year evaluation, you must have been employed by SDUSD for at least 10 years and be a permanent employee, be "highly qualified" under NCLB (if required for the position you occupy), and your previous evaluation must have been "effective." You and your evaluator must both agree that you will be evaluated on a five-year cycle. However, thanks to stronger language bargained in 2015, **you cannot be denied the right to a five-year cycle for arbitrary or capricious reasons.** This means that without a good reason, the five-year cycle is essentially the default cycle for qualifying unit

members, *if* the unit member requests it. Each agreement is decided on an individual basis. A "blanket denial" of the five-year cycle for all members at a site is also a contract violation.

It's a good idea to get that agreement in writing. At any time in the evaluation cycle, you or your evaluator may withdraw consent to the five-year cycle, but if the evaluator does so, the reason cannot be arbitrary or capricious.

### Designation of Evaluator

Usually, your principal/site supervisor is your evaluator. Sometimes the principal/site supervisor might choose to designate someone else to play the role of an evaluator. The designee must be a credentialed supervisory personnel (e.g. Vice Principal, Site Administrator, Program Manager/Director).

The contract is clear in stating that no unit member shall evaluate another unit member, nor may another unit member provide verbal



or written feedback about your performance to an administrator. However, by simply helping a teacher with techniques and/or giving pointers, an observation by a fellow unit member is permissible. The information gathered from the observation cannot be relayed to the administration. This should be an understanding between the two teachers, prior to any peer observation. Such observations should be mutually agreed to, and **not** unilaterally directed by administration.

### Right to Representation

If problems arise during your evaluation cycle, you have a right to union representation at any meeting that you reasonably believe may result in disciplinary or adverse action. The scope of a union member's right to union representation includes evaluation progress check meetings and other meetings tied to an evaluation.

If you believe your rights have been violated, contact your Association Representative (AR) to explore filing a grievance.

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- Help finding a family doctor or specialist

### VEBA Advocacy Program ([vebaonline.com](http://vebaonline.com))

- Help if your doctors or the health plan can't answer your questions
- Issues related to getting care or quality of care
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