

THE ADVOCATE

Members build union power at Fall Leadership

On Saturday, Oct. 17, SDEA member leaders spent the day sharing stories, learning skills, and building union power. From reviewing new contract rights won through our *Fight for 5!* to launching an effort to build power in the face of attacks against educators and all public servants (see page 3), participants dug deep into the organizing and advocacy work that makes SDEA a strong voice for public education.

Fall Leadership is a great way for current SDEA activists to brush up their knowledge and skills in leadership and advocacy, but perhaps the most important participants were the new up-and-coming leaders. People like Steve Mendiola and Kimberly Allard, new ARs at Hage Elem. and Vista Grande Elem. respectively, worked side-by-side with more seasoned activists who have been advocating for SDEA members at their sites for years. Bringing in new voices and new blood is absolutely vital to the health of our union!

Participants were also fortunate to be joined by CTA's new Secretary-Treasurer David Goldberg, who shared some of the great work being done around California and spoke to the importance of an engaged and active membership that builds relationships with parents and in the community. Goldberg



SDEA member leaders flexed some union muscle and strengthened their organizing and advocacy skills at this year's Fall Leadership Conference.

was rightly impressed with the work we are doing, even going so far as to say it was the most exciting local conference he has seen so far. We agree!

As exciting as Fall Leadership was, it is important that we keep the momentum

going throughout the year. We face a lot of challenges this year, perhaps none more important than the upcoming Supreme Court ruling on the Friedrichs vs. CTA case. No matter how the Supreme Court rules, though, we know that SDEA will come

through an even stronger union thanks to the hard work and dedication of our members.

SDEA leaders say "thank you!" to the dedicated ARs, CRs and site leaders who attended this year's Fall Leadership. Together we are stronger!



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Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham
SDEA President



Michelle Sanchez
SDEA Vice President

Leaders focus on involving *all* members

As we enter into the third month of the 2015-2016 school year, we reflect on the important work that SDEA members participate in every year. We have members advocating for their rights at school sites and departments. We had over 60 ARs, CRs and member leaders attend our SDEA Fall Leadership to improve their advocacy skills and learn about our "Everyone A Member Campaign". During the weekend of October 23-25, our SDEA CTA State Council delegates traveled to Los Angeles for a powerful training on the importance of relational organizing in member recruitment and engagement.

State Council Representatives had the opportunity to be trained by legendary United Farm Workers' organizer and Harvard lecturer Marshall Ganz. Using public narrative (the story of self, the story of us and the story of now) and other organizing techniques he developed in his work with the Civil Rights movement, the UFW and national elections, Ganz's work with State Council will further a goal of CTA's Strategic Plan—to establish an organizing culture at the local, regional and state levels of our union to build greater capacity and

deepen participation among all members. With the pending Supreme Court case Friedrichs vs. CTA and the possible loss of fair share (see October 2015 Advocate), this is a key goal this year as we all work together to ensure all educators are members of our union and are engaged in the work we do.

Our newly trained State Council delegates, ARs, CRs, and members of our SDEA Fair Share Task Force will be leading the member organizing and engagement work throughout SDEA. We are looking forward to visiting every school site and program to listen and learn about why educators join the union and what we can do to make our union more relevant to our members. Over the next few months, we are scheduling union-wide site meetings to have these conversations and look forward to building a stronger, more engaged and united union to continue our fight together for the schools our students and educators deserve!

Lindsay Burningham
Lindsay Burningham
SDEA President

Michelle Sanchez
Michelle Sanchez
SDEA Vice President

Why do you choose to be a union member?



"Teachers get pressure from all sides -- politicians, principals, parents. Being part of a union is the strongest way to put forward the teacher's voice."

— **Michael Bullington**
Science Teacher
Morse HS



"I choose to be a member of my union because it is important to show solidarity. We can get better working conditions together!"

— **Maria Ofelia Mendez**
1st Grade Teacher
Language Academy



"Administration has always looked to the workforce to save. SDEA offers a defense from folks taking advantage of us. We can DO SOMETHING if they don't listen."

— **Reinaldo Wilson**
5th Grade Teacher
Kimbrough Elem.



"I choose to be a member of my union to be part of a democratic process so that no one is taken advantage of by the system. We have each other's backs."

— **Tricia DeLuna**
2nd/3rd Grade Teacher
Hage Elementary

Our new bargained leave rights are in effect

When SDEA members voted overwhelmingly to approve a new contract for 2014-2017 in May of 2015, one of the key areas of improvement in this new contract is found in Article 10: Leaves.

Personal Necessity Leave now provides members greater discretion under the Personal/Family Responsibility category (Section 10.3.9). The number of days a member can take for personal/family reasons increased from three to five. Members can now use up to five days of accumulated sick leave to attend to compelling personal or family responsibilities

during the workday.

Another major improvement was that Paternity Leave for fathers, spouses, and partners was expanded in the event of a birth or adoption of a new child (Section 10.5). Under the new terms of the contract, Paternity Leave has been expanded to include the ability to convert 10 accumulated sick days for the purposes of this leave. Newly expecting fathers/spouses/partners get one "free" paternity day off that is not charged to the member's sick leave bank. The new contract also allows the ability to convert 10 sick days for paternity leave



purposes, as well as up to nine Personal Necessity and Personal Business days: one Birth/Adoption day (Section 10.3.7), five Personal/Family Responsibility days (Section

10.3.9), and three Personal Business days (Section 10.4.2).

These expanded rights reflect members' priority to have greater flexibility with leave usage!

Class size crunch: County contract comparison

Article 13, Section 13.3.2 of our union contract states that individual secondary teachers' academic classes shall be no more than thirty-six (36) pupils each.

Class sizes are always an issue when bargaining contract improvements across the county and state. Our academic class language stands up well

when we look at some of our surrounding unions. Grossmont has suggested department average class size ranges of 28-38, while contract language in Oceanside states that classes of 40 or more must be reported to the union. In Poway, classes can exceed 36 if the Superintendent grants approval. Other unions such as Sweetwater and

Carlsbad have a daily total of student contacts. Sweetwater bargained for 2015-2016 a total daily class size not to go beyond 176, while Carlsbad's is higher, at 198.

The "hard cap" in SDEA's contract became effective July 1, 2012 and prior language only dealt with class size averages. Due to the tenacity

of our ARs, CRs and members, we have successfully enforced the language since the July 1, 2012 implementation. SDEA members have stood strong every year to defend our hard-fought, strong contract language, and to make sure SDUSD understands that the 36 hard cap means exactly that: 36!

SDEA 'Everyone a Member!' off to a strong start

With the impending ruling coming as early as this June on the Friedrichs vs. CTA Supreme Court case, it is more important than ever that the members of SDEA ask ourselves, "Why do I choose to be a member of SDEA?"

There is no one right answer to this question. Perhaps I choose to be a member of SDEA because I want the protections that being part of a collective group of like-minded individuals affords me. Perhaps I choose to be a member because I understand how important unions are for fighting for the middle class. Perhaps I choose

to be a member of SDEA because I enjoy the benefits of strong wages and benefits, job security, class size-protections and advocacy that being a part of SDEA provides me.

No matter what your reason is, it is important to reflect on and to talk with other members about the importance of being a member of SDEA. A strong connection and commitment to SDEA for all members is paramount to the continued strength of SDEA.

Being a member of SDEA is about much more than just filling out and signing a membership form. It's about

identifying strongly with our fellow educators who we work with day in and day out to meet the needs of our students. It's about fighting together against layoffs, for fair funding, and against injustice at our sites. It's about having each other's back.

SDEA member leaders are mounting a membership engagement campaign in the form of a Fair Share Task Force that will shore up and strengthen SDEA for the rest of this year and beyond. This Task force is made up of approximately fifteen member leaders who represent the breadth and scope of our membership.

Throughout the coming year, they will be out at sites holding educational meetings and reaching out to new educators as well as our veteran members to communicate the importance of being an active, engaged and proud member of SDEA. If SDEA is to stay relevant in a potentially post fair-share world, we all have to understand why being and remaining a member of SDEA is vital to the future of public education itself. Look for your site Association Representative to have more information in the coming months. Together we are stronger!



Protect what matters to you.

When you're out of commission, you aren't just out of the classroom. You're missing out on what makes you, you. That's why it pays to protect your way of life with CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance from The Standard. It replaces part of your income to pay for the things medical insurance won't cover — like groceries, the mortgage, utility bills and more. Get the confidence that comes with knowing you've protected your future so you can focus on making the most of today. Learn more at CTAMemberBenefits.org/TheStandard.



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 GP 190-LTD/S399/CTA.1 SI 17312-CTAvol

All About

COVERING INELIGIBLE DEPENDENTS MAY BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH BENEFITS

As a VEBA member, you can cover eligible dependents in your health plan. However, covering ineligible dependents may be dangerous to your health benefits and wallet. Here's why:

- **It's against the law** and you may have to pay a penalty to the government.
- **The insurance company may not cover services** if your ineligible dependent needs care. This means you will be left to pay the bill.
- **Your dependent may have to wait to get other coverage.**

Most of the time, ineligible dependents are covered due to an oversight. For example, you may not have updated your benefits information after a divorce. Or, you may have a child who recently reached his or her 26th birthday. Whatever the reason, please contact your District Benefits Office to update your information.

WHO CAN JOIN YOUR HEALTH PLAN

This chart shows who can join your health plan. If you have a dependent in your plan in the "NO" column, contact your District Benefits Office. They will help you find the best way to get your dependent the right coverage.

| YES | NO |
|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Ex-Spouse/Partner |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Domestic Partner | <input type="checkbox"/> Former Stepchild |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child-Biological | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child-Step | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandparent |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child-Adopted | <input type="checkbox"/> Children over age 26 |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child-Guardianship | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchildren |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Child-Disabled | <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Aunt/Uncle |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Niece/Nephew/Cousin |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Girlfriend/Boyfriend |

