

# THE ADVOCATE

## 2017-18 is make-or-break for our union

Public education is under **coordinated** attack. Nationwide. Statewide. **Right here. Right now.**

Wealthy privatizers whose long-time goal is to dismantle public education are looking to land a knock-out punch against teacher unions and the schools we protect *this year*.

### Federal Attacks on School Funding Coming Soon

Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos plans to massively defund public education at the federal level, with California being the state that will take the biggest hit. DeVos' proposed budget would cut **\$749,565,281** in funding to California's schools.

### Charter School Attacks on CA School Boards

Here in San Diego Unified we already face a continued exodus of our students to charter schools. Now the California Charter Schools Association (CCSA) is going after school board seats statewide to throw open the floodgates not only for even more new charter schools, but the conversion of our existing public schools to charter schools.

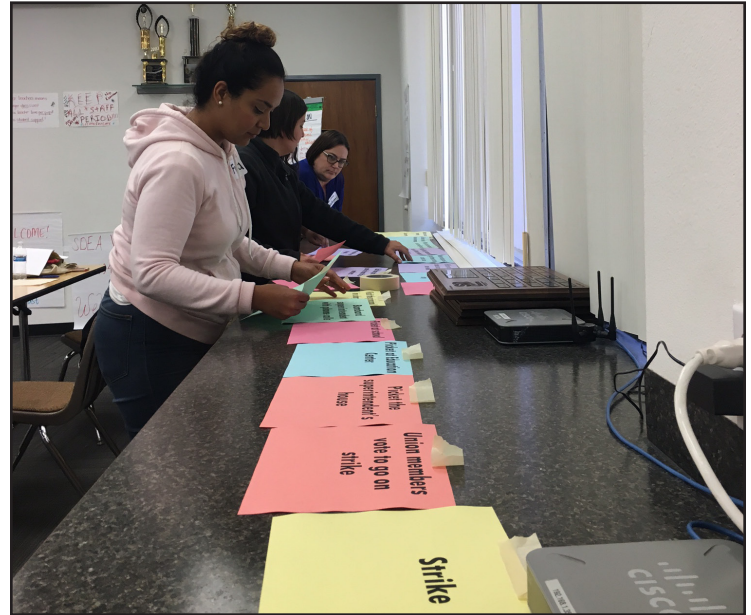
This past year we saw the most expensive school board race in our nation's history take place in Los Angeles. CCSA's wealthy donors poured millions of dollars into just one LAUSD school board race, to pick off

a seat held by one of the last defenders of public schools in LA. The charter-backed candidate prevailed over the candidate endorsed by the union members of UTLA. LAUSD's board is now officially a CCSA-backed majority—and CCSA indicates that our school board here in San Diego is next.

### Attacks on Our Union in the Supreme Court

At the same time, thanks to the appointment of new Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch, our union's ability to collect our "fair share" of dues will almost certainly be gone within a year. Fair share is the idea that everyone who enjoys the benefits and protections of the union contract should, in fairness, contribute to maintaining the contract. Current Supreme Court rulings acknowledge that it's not fair for some people to get union benefits for free while others pay.

If upheld in June 2018, Supreme Court case *Janus v. AFSCME* would change that. The law would continue to require public sector unions like SDEA to bargain and enforce the contract for everyone, but would allow individuals to decide whether or not to pay their fair share for those benefits. Lawsuits like *Janus* are being funded by the same billionaires who will profit from privatizing public schools



At a core training in August, SDEA member leaders took time out of their summer to learn organizing skills for the year ahead!

once our unions die. Public sector unions are the single strongest and most effective defender of public services. With our unions out of the way, the path is clear to convert or replace public schools with for-profit charters and other money-makers that are good for billionaires, but bad for kids, and bad for educators who want to live a stable, middle class life.

What does life look like for educators in states like Michigan and Wisconsin where state legislators have recently killed fair share? Many members think they will get the same benefits

without paying union dues, and so stop paying. The union then becomes too weak to effectively bargain and enforce the contract. Wages decrease. Health care premiums skyrocket. Basic workplace protections around hours, safety, class size and other supports vanish. If SDEA members don't band together to protect our union, this will be our world within a year.

### Bad Bargaining Behavior by SDUSD

In addition to these external threats, our own school district

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## Letters in Solidarity

Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA President

Kisha Borden  
SDEA Vice President



## Welcome back—now let's L.E.A.R.N.!

We are excited to welcome you as a fellow SDEA educator for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year. We hope you all enjoyed your well-deserved summer break and found time to relax and spend time with friends and family! We had a busy 2016-2017 school year and things are not slowing down for 2017-2018.

SDEA members, leaders and staff have been busy all summer attending conferences, trainings and planning meetings to ensure they have the skills necessary and plans in place for a successful 2017-2018 school year. The work has not stopped over the summer and we are ready to stand strong and united in the busy year ahead of us!

Every day SDEA members, staff and elected leaders advocate, protect and stand up for the rights of the educators and students of San Diego. We stand together in support of public education and to ensure our educators and students are respected and have the schools and resources we ALL deserve. As members, staff and leaders of SDEA, we continue to use our voices and collective strength to ensure that resources are being directed to our students and the schools they learn in and we teach in every day. Our working conditions are our students' learning conditions. Our current bargaining campaign, L.E.A.R.N., calls for the district to make our students and classrooms a priority. L.E.A.R.N. includes:

1. Lower class sizes and caseloads
2. Expanded enrichment classes
3. Attracting and keeping the best educators
4. Resources for our students
5. No destabilizing schools

As many of you are aware, our current round of contract negotiations began in May 2017 and will be continuing this fall. Keep an eye out for future bargaining updates and how you can get involved.

We must stand together and support one another as we work to protect and improve public education in San Diego, California and across the nation. As educators, we experience many successes and challenges daily in our classrooms and SDEA is here to celebrate your successes and provide support in your challenges. Across the state and nation, we are also facing many challenges as public education, our students and communities continue to be under attack. We must strengthen existing coalitions, build new coalitions and stand up together and strong for the schools and public education system our students, educators and communities deserve.

During the year ahead, you will be called upon to become more active and engaged in the work of our union to win the L.E.A.R.N. union contract our students deserve and to stand up in defense of students and public education. Thank you in advance for dedicating your time and energy to impact the lives and learning of the students, families and communities in San Diego.

Together We Are Stronger and Together WE Are SDEA!

*Lindsay Burningham*  
Lindsay Burningham  
SDEA President

*Kisha Borden*  
Kisha Borden  
SDEA Vice President

## SDEA member and activist Kiki Ochoa honored

This summer Lincoln High School teacher Kiki Ochoa was honored by the San Diego and Imperial Counties Labor Council for his organizing spirit and tireless devotion to building a stronger labor movement and community. With threats to workers, immigrants, people of color, women's rights and the LBGTQIA community, we must stand together and by our students and their communities. Thank you for all of your hard work and dedication towards building a better tomorrow for all!



# Rosa Parks reads with SDEA community grant

Rosa Parks Elementary TK/K family members presented Reader's Theatre scripts to all eight TK/K classes at our school. The SDEA Family Engagement Grant Project went exceptionally well! Most of the parents who participated in this grant were ELL participants and were a bit apprehensive about presenting in front of their children. Once the families realized that they would have access to the script as they presented, they were relieved they didn't have to memorize the lines.

According to Cara Bafile in the article "Reader's Theater: Giving Students a Reason to Read Aloud", Reader's Theater offers an entertaining and engaging means of improving fluency and enhancing comprehension. That is exactly what it did for our family members!

We wanted to help families realize how to make reading fun and creative with the hopes that parents would then read the stories at home to their children. Performing two Reader's Theatre Scripts (in English and Spanish) gave the families the confidence to sit with their children at home and make the stories that much more interesting. After several weeks of practicing reading the scripts, the readers saw how the characters from the book came to life and their children listened attentively to the story. Parents were so excited about their participation that they designed and made their costumes for the performances.

Thanks to SDEA, every TK/K student went home with a book with a special note in English, Spanish and Vietnamese letting parents know their child enjoyed



watching a Reader's Theatre presentation. It asked parents to further enjoy the story with their child and gave examples of CCSS-based questions parents could ask about story.

As a result, students became motivated to read and parents became engaged in meaningful literacy activities with their child. Most importantly it made families realize how much fun reading

can be by adding a little drama when they read to their child! It also encouraged parents to be engaged in their child's school activities.

*Submitted by Marilyn Levitan, Family Resource Teacher Hoover Cluster Elementary Schools (Area 4) and Linda Guerra-Adame, Kindergarten Bilingual Teacher at Rosa Parks Elementary*

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## THREATS

*Continued from p. 1*

is trampling our contract and blowing off bargaining. The first five months of bargaining moved at a snail's pace, with the District sending their team to the table unprepared to make proposals. When they have made proposals, it's been even worse. Last spring, SDUSD proposed deep take-backs on our transfer rights and prep time. Last week, they proposed making 17 schools totally exempt from class size protections! After pushback from members and the bargaining team, the District backed off of those concessions. But most of their proposals have yet to come.

### **SDEA Members Have a Plan to Win!**

If we and our schools are going to survive and thrive in

the landscape to come, we must win a fair contract by the end of this year so we can turn our energy to fighting the outside threats we face. SDEA leaders and staff have planned three waves of escalating union-wide actions that will build us to win a strong contract by spring, or force the District to contend with a crisis of their creation.

**Every school in SDEA will have a Wave One Union Organizing meeting by late October.** Your participation in your school's meeting and the actions to come will make the difference between success and failure in the fight ahead. Ask your AR about your Wave One meeting! We can win, and we will win, if we stand together. Because SDEA members know, **Together We Are Stronger!**

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