

# THE ADVOCATE

SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# FLOOD THE DISTRICT

AFTER MINIMAL RESPONSE TO OUR PROPOSALS,  
IT'S TIME TO TURN UP THE HEAT!

Photo: Ivan Bandura

# WHERE HAVE WE BEEN AND WHERE ARE WE GOING NEXT?

## SDEA MEMBERS ARE FIGHTING FOR A NEW UNION CONTRACT THIS YEAR

We have a bargaining platform, and it's called Recover, Rebuild, Rise Together! Our platform is our bargaining demands. It's how we're shaping the public narrative about what our schools need. SDEA members collectively decided what we'll fight for in Bargaining Input Sessions at more than 140 schools and programs last spring.

## SDUSD HAS THE MONEY

We know that the school district has the money to pay for the union contract we want! The District is getting much bigger funding increases this year AND next year. In fact, the District is getting an increase of more than 18% in 2 years. It's much better than past years.

## WHO'S ON THE SCHOOL BOARD EFFECTS BARGAINING

We also know that our jobs are political, and elections are a factor in the union contract we win. There's good news – SDEA member-endorsed school board candidates won the Nov. 8 election! Now it's time to hold them to their commitment to support our union contract demands.

## THE SDEA BARGAINING TEAM IS PROACTIVE AT THE TABLE

First, the SDEA Bargaining Team is made up of union members, like us. Our SDEA Bargaining Team has so far proposed:

- A 10% + 10% pay raise
- Summer healthcare coverage for temporary members
- Double paid maternity leave from 3 weeks to 6 weeks
- Triple paid partner/paternity leave from 1 day to 3 days
- Double paid elementary prep time from less than 1 hour a week to 2 hours a week
- To protect secondary prep time by prohibiting meetings or conferences during prep time
- TK staffing increases and class size caps
- Reducing upper elementary class size
- Hard caps on secondary PE class size
- School Nurse assignment improvements
- Elementary schools staffed with a full time counselor
- Special Education workload and staffing improvements

## WHAT HAVE WE HEARD FROM THE DISTRICT ON OUR BARGAINING PROPOSALS?

Crickets! The District hasn't responded to any of these really important proposals we made! That's bad news. It's a sign that they aren't treating bargaining and these issues on the table like they matter.

## MEANWHILE, SDEA MEMBERS ARE GETTING LOUD

We've been taking collective action to pressure the school board and superintendent to settle a good union contract by April 2023. What've we done so far?

- Solidarity Sticker Week in September
- Family Flyer Week in October
- Worn red on bargaining days
- Moved new hires to join our union so we're more united in the fight for a union contract

## NOW WE ARE TURNING UP THE HEAT!

**SDEA members proposed big changes at the bargaining table, and SDEA members took collective action for a union contract and to show these issues are important. But we're hearing crickets from the school board and superintendent. And that's why SDEA members are turning up the heat this winter!**

# Flood the School Board

**December 13<sup>th</sup> 4-5:15**

Rally at the School Board meeting at the Education Center

3-6 members per school (depending on size), but all are welcome

Wear red and bring co-workers!



**KYLE WEINBERG**  
SDEA President

# Letters In Solidarity



**LISA MORRIS**  
SDEA Vice President

## ELECTIONS MATTER!

In addition to electing two SDUSD parents and pro-public education voices to our school board, San Diego voters made a big commitment to invest in our schools and educators by [overwhelmingly supporting the Measure U SDUSD bond](#). Measure U will provide needed resources to maintain current school facilities, build new schools and, in a first for our county, will [fund the building of SDUSD workforce housing](#).

There is also a direct and important relationship between this bond and our ability to continue to win improvements in educator pay. The reality is that as a school community, we must have multiple strategies to address the challenges we face, from the staffing shortage, to [rising housing costs](#), to the cost of maintaining our schools. Measure U impacts all of these areas positively while also making it easier for us, as a union, to bargain for wage increases. Educators and parents know that good pay and benefits are key to ending the unprecedented staffing shortage and keeping educators in our district. That's why [our bargaining platform](#) includes pay raises that keep up with cost-of-living increases.

Some of us have asked why Measure U bond funds cannot instead be used to increase educator pay directly so that we are better able to afford housing in San Diego. Unfortunately, bond money cannot be used for educator salaries. The good news, however, is that it doesn't have to. Measure U relieves pressure on the general fund which allows resources to be invested in staff. The state and federal government do not provide sufficient funding to maintain SDUSD schools (\$245 million yearly deterioration/backlog)

and without bond funding, resources in the district's general fund could be potentially diverted away from other priorities like educator pay and benefits needed to retain and recruit needed staff.

We can't rest on our laurels, however, after the recent electoral victories in SDUSD. In 2024, 3 SDUSD board trustee seats will be up for election, which means that the pro-educator majority on our school board is in the balance. We have already seen in this past election that school board candidates seeking to privatize public schools think that vouchers are a winning issue with parents. Billionaire opponents to our SDEA-endorsed candidates and bond measure spent heavily in this past election and we can assume that they will spend even more in 2024.

We have been successful in using SDEA Political Action Committee (PAC) funds to elect school board trustees that share our values and priorities for more than a decade but we cannot take this for granted. Wealthy supporters of school privatization will continue to write six-figure checks for candidates that will advance their agenda, while SDEA members rely on small contributions from each of us to protect our schools. Regular donations from our 6,000+ educators will always beat a large donation from a billionaire! If you are not already a monthly contributor to the SDEA PAC, [click here to sign up](#).

### TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER!

**KYLE WEINBERG**  
SDEA PRESIDENT

**LISA MORRIS**  
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

# EDUCATORS WANT A TK PROGRAM THAT WORKS, *so we're speaking out!*

During the pandemic, SDUSD overhauled Early Childhood Education and TK, creating Universal Transitional Kindergarten (UTK). Thousands of 3- and 4-year-olds who were previously taught in SDUSD's preschool classrooms are now in TK classrooms with 5-year-olds. This is called UTK.

Educators who are impacted by the quickly expanding UTK

had two union meetings in October and November to identify problems in UTK and make a plan of action. For some teachers, it was their first union meeting ever!

After getting all the problems out onto chart paper, we then used sticky dots to identify the problems that most need to be solved.

## TOP PROBLEMS WERE:

### **SDUSD isn't investing in enough staff for UTK students.**

Early learners need more trained staff to teach them well and keep them safe, but instead of hiring them, SDUSD is either making the students go without, or in other cases, pulling staff from other important work to cover UTK. There are supposed to be two teachers in every UTK classroom, but some just have one teacher for twenty-four 3-5 year-olds. Oftentimes a Prep Time Teacher is on their own with the entire class too.

### **SDUSD isn't supporting UTK students and teachers with developmentally appropriate curriculum and materials.**

Teachers identified two main problems in this area: They either don't have curriculum at all, or the curriculum is too rigorous and not sufficiently play-based for early learners. In addition, UTK classrooms aren't universally outfitted with age-appropriate furniture and manipulatives.

### **SDUSD isn't investing in UTK students by training educators.**

For Early Childhood Education Teachers,

3-5-year-olds are their area of expertise. But for so many other educators – Elementary Teachers, Prep Time Teachers, SLPs, and Education Specialists – this is their first time working with the age group. Yet SDUSD isn't training us on the special educational needs of students at this developmental level. We want to do better by these students but need to build our capacity, but don't know how. Moreover, Early Childhood Education Teachers and Elementary Teachers are charged with co-teaching, but instead of SDUSD training us on co-teaching methods, they basically told us to sink or swim.

**SDUSD doesn't have a clear vision, direction, and communication system for UTK.** This was the overarching problem teachers pointed to. What are we doing? Why are we doing it? Are all of the pieces in place so that we can be successful? We don't know what the big picture is, and when it comes to the "small picture," the day-to-day, SDUSD leaders just aren't clearly and effectively communicating with UTK teachers on issues like curriculum, materials, funding, and training.

## **SDEA MEMBERS AREN'T SITTING DOWN AND TAKING IT, WE'RE SPEAKING OUT!**

Educators sent giant postcards to Superintendent Lamont Jackson inviting him to a Listening Session! event at the SDEA Auditorium! On January 12, educators will pack the Auditorium and make Superintendent Jackson hear us out. This isn't a typical meeting where the district leader talks and we listen. This time the shoe is on the other foot – we're going to talk, and they're going to listen! We want a TK program that works, and as the top leader of the school district, we're asking Superintendent Jackson to fix what's wrong in the program. SDUSD owes it to our youngest learners to implement TK the right way.

## **UTK LISTENING SESSION**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>  
AT THE SDEA AUDITORIUM, 10393 SAN DIEGO  
MISSION ROAD IN MISSION VALLEY

### **4-4:30pm UNION MEETING**

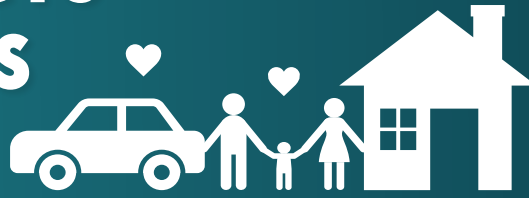
(Don't miss this part because it's where we'll strategize to get on the same page and speak with a unified voice before the superintendent enters!)

### **4:30-5:30pm LISTENING SESSION** with Superintendent Lamont Jackson

*Wear red! Bring signs and co-workers!*

**REGISTER NOW TO SAY YOU'LL BE THERE!**

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# TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER



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## Season with the VEBA Resource Center

Make this your healthiest Holiday Season yet!  
 The VRC has **FREE** resources to help you  
 stress less and have a healthy holiday!

Join us at one of our many **FREE** fitness,  
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Visit us at [vebresourcecenter.com/calendar/](http://vebresourcecenter.com/calendar/) to check out  
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TOGETHER  
WE ARE  
STRONGER

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