

THE ADVOCATE

SAN DIEGO EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

UNION DEMOCRACY STARTS WITH MEMBER-LED BARGAINING INPUT SESSIONS



In September, SDEA members will start bargaining for a new union contract that improves our schools and our jobs. Bargaining Input Sessions are taking place April – June (July at year-round schools) to get ready.

WHO SETS THE PRIORITIES FOR BARGAINING IN SDEA? Members! Starting in April, Association Reps. (ARs) have been leading Bargaining Input Sessions at every school. For members who aren't based at a school, Bargaining Input Sessions are happening in other locations. For example, Speech Language Pathologists had a Bargaining Input Session at the SDEA Auditorium in May.

WHAT HAPPENS AT A BARGAINING INPUT SESSION? This is where we brainstorm the things about our jobs and schools that we most want to stay the same, and the things we most want to improve. We do it together in a union meeting instead of an online survey because we benefit from hearing and discussing each other's ideas in a group setting. After we brainstorm, we vote on our top priorities.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE RESULTS FROM OUR BARGAINING INPUT SESSION? The AR records each priority and the number of votes it received in the Bargaining Input Session and returns that. Back at the SDEA office, there is a lot of behind-the-scenes data entry. Like priorities are grouped with other like priorities. The



SDEA Members at Hancock Elementary School after completing their school's Bargaining Input Session.

SDEA Bargaining Team, made up of members and a few SDEA staff, use that data to set priorities. For example, longevity pay was a big issue in past input sessions, and now it is one of the top issues for the SDEA Bargaining Team.

DIDN'T I JUST GO TO A BARGAINING INPUT SESSION? Yes, you probably went to a Bargaining Input Session in the fall! That Input Session was limited in scope for *reopener bargaining*, when limited sections of the contract are reopened for changes. Now we are having Input Sessions on the entire scope of issues we can bargain over: pay, benefits, and working conditions (that last one is really broad!). If you haven't had a Bargaining Input Session at your school this spring, reach out to your AR and ask how you can help make it happen!

VICTORY FOR NEW TEACHERS!

At the beginning of our careers, we are often at our most vulnerable. Employers and bosses can take advantage of that. But because we are a union, we can protect each other and our rights.

For new teachers, it took some time, but we finally won backpay for our attendance at SDUSD's New Teacher Orientation in August 2018.

SDUSD didn't pay the newly hired teachers who went to the day-long event,

even though it was training, it was work, and we have the right to be paid for our work. We enforced our rights in the union contract to be paid for our work – and won! SDUSD must make payments to those who attended New Teacher Orientation by May 31, 2019.

This was the second union win this year specifically for new teachers. The other came when SDUSD had to give 15 newly hired educators retroactive health

care benefits in response to a grievance. The grievance was filed when these new hires were denied health care benefits in violation of our union contract, which protects our right to fully paid family health care. In most cases, the teachers submitted health care enrollment forms, but they weren't processed by HR.

To join SDEA, visit sdea.net or talk to your Association Rep. (AR).



10393 SAN DIEGO MISSION ROAD
STE. 100, SAN DIEGO, 92108
PHONE (619) 283-4411
FAX (619) 282-7659
WEB WWW.SDEA.NET

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LETTERS IN SOLIDARITY

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SDEA PRESIDENT



SCOTT MULLIN
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

GOOD NEWS IN THE GOVERNOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET

Governor Newsom's May Revision of the state budget demonstrates a true commitment to public education. Among the highlights are increased funding to TK-12 education, special education, recruitment and retention, and STRS assistance to school districts.

The most encouraging element of the May Revision is the 3.26% Cost-of-Living-Adjustment (COLA). This allows school districts to provide raises for all educators and support personnel who work directly with students every day. The COLA would provide an additional \$48 million to SDUSD next year.

Additionally, the governor's proposed budget would send \$10-15 million to SDUSD in Special Education funding. That will be enough to hire more teachers and augment existing intervention services to students with IEPs.

The May Revision also includes a proposal to recruit and retain educators by providing \$89.8 million for student loan repayment for newly-credentialed teachers in high-need areas and \$44.8 million for training and resources for classroom educators.

Another aspect of the budget is a \$3.15 billion, one-time payment to assist school

districts in their CalSTRS payments. This adds \$7-8 million, in previously unexpected funding, to help pay for SDUSD's portion of CalSTRS benefits.

While the increased funding is encouraging, there is still a severe lack of funding for California's public education system compared to the needs of our students. We must continue to work at the state and national level to ensure that our students and communities receive the support they need and deserve.

One very tangible way to accomplish that goal is to support the Schools and Communities First Initiative that will appear on the November 2020 ballot. This initiative will return approximately \$11 billion state-wide for our schools, community colleges and other vital community services every year, ongoing. This will not get us to adequate funding levels, but it is a step in the right direction. It will take this initiative and other economic policy changes to ensure that our schools and our students are fully supported.

Kisha Borden
KISHA BORDEN
SDEA PRESIDENT

Scott Mullin
SCOTT MULLIN
SDEA VICE PRESIDENT

— KNOW YOUR RIGHTS —

RETIREE MEDICAL BENEFIT FUND

The question of how to pay for health care is often a difficult one for educators nearing retirement. However, a benefit of our contract includes payment towards continuing medical care coverage for eligible retirees.

Educators who retire with at least 17 years of service with the District are eligible to receive a stipend, currently set at \$375 per month, to help cover medical benefits up to age 67.

The stipend applies towards the cost of continuing coverage in a District health plan after retirement. This benefit allows retirees to maintain continuity of their health care at a more affordable cost.

The Retiree Medical Fund is managed by a joint SDEA-SDUSD trust, with both SDEA and the District having equal representation on the trust's board of directors. Changes to the amount of the stipend can only occur with approval from both SDEA and the District. These benefits are funded by the District's contractual requirement to make regular payments to the trust.

More details about the Retiree Medical Benefit Fund can be found in Section 9.8 of the contract. Contact SDUSD's Payroll and Benefits department for enrollment information.



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CALIFORNIA SCHOOLS
VEBA



STAY COOL THIS SUMMER

Ready to enjoy the endless stretch of perfect weather this summer? Before frolicking out in the summer sun though, remember that it can also be dangerous. To prevent heat-related illnesses:

- ⦿ Schedule outdoor activities before 10 a.m. or after 6 p.m.
- ⦿ Avoid drinks that have caffeine or alcohol.
- ⦿ Wear a hat or grab an umbrella to protect yourself from the sun.
- ⦿ Drink lots of water. Sip every 15 to 20 minutes, even if you're not thirsty.
- ⦿ Before heading out, apply sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15.

UHC Alliance members: Get back to your summer fun quicker with convenient walk-in health care, available to you through the Scripps/VEBA partnership. Scripps *HealthExpress* clinics can treat minor illnesses and injuries like:

- ⦿ Bug bites and stings
- ⦿ Minor cuts and burns
- ⦿ Skin conditions
- ⦿ Ear infection and earache

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It pays to be a CTA member

CTA membership comes with many great benefits including access to the only CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance plans from Standard Insurance Company (The Standard). Now, at no extra cost to you, when you protect your paycheck with CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance from The Standard, you can get access to two new benefits from CTA:*

- Student Loan Benefit
- Cancer Benefit

These added benefits are available exclusively for members enrolled in the CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability Insurance plans on a qualified disability claim.

Learn more!

Visit us at CTAMemberBenefits.org/Disability

*The benefits are offered by CTA to eligible members on approved disability claims under the CTA-endorsed Voluntary Disability Insurance plans with a disability date on or after 9/1/2018 who meet additional specific criteria. CTA provides these benefits at no extra cost, and The Standard acts only as the claims administrator of these benefits. Student Loan and Cancer Benefits are not provided under the Disability Insurance policy. For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, benefit waiting periods, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policies 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 GP190-LTD/S399/CTA.1 SI 20197-CTAvol (08/18)

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