

SMEA

SAN MARCOS EDUCATORS' ASSOCIATION

THE DEFENDER



Top: Twin Oaks Elementary. Bottom from left: Richland Elementary; Woodland Park Middle.



This issue, in a tweet:
Member recognition. Website
& Executive Board updates.
Contract violations. Schools &
Communities 1st.
#smeateachers #unionstrong



President's Message

Dear Colleagues,

There have been many changes in the last several years at SMUSD. We have a new school board, a new superintendent, new schools, and hundreds of new employees. It is often said that “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it”. Last year was a difficult year for many of us, whether you are certificated, classified, or administration, you likely faced your share of challenges.



SMEA President Michael DeVries, pictured above right, with CTA President E. Toby Boyd (left).

As we start this school year we cannot forget our past, but we can learn from it and move forward. Quite possibly, the cornerstone of education is collaboration. Not only teacher-to-teacher collaboration, but between all stakeholders in the education community. Shared decision making is essential for an organization such as a school district to be highly successful. For the sake of our students, we must dedicate ourselves to this collaboration and make sure that everyone has a seat at the table as we forge ahead as a district.

One way our success can be defined is by the success of our students. We must be the voices for our students. We must all stand up and be sure we are strong advocates for public education. When we come together as one it is truly incredible what we can accomplish.

In 1961 JFK said - “Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength of the nation.” This still stands true today.

They say a good school is the heart of a neighborhood. Well then a good school district is the lifeline of a community. We cannot wait on Sacramento and certainly not DC to solve our problems. We are the ones that serve this community. We are the ones who must figure out what is best for our students. And as the lifeline of our community we can not forget that student learning conditions are teacher working conditions and the two are inextricably linked.

Whether you teach seniors or TK, remember, these kids only get one shot at that school year. We must work together to ensure we provide the best year we can for our students and community.

Yours in Solidarity,
Michael DeVries, President

New Website Goes Live!

Over the summer, SMEA's website got a much-needed make-over thanks to our Director of Digital Media, Marla Rosenthal. Check out our new



website for member benefits, resources (e.g., contract, agendas, grant information), events, and committee information. If you haven't yet, be sure to sign up for our mailing list using your home email address.

sanmarcosteachers.org

Let's Give Our Educators a Standing OVATION!

In the spirit of greatness, we would like to recognize and honor the work that our members do every day. This fall, SMEA is launching our member recognition program, OVATION!

We believe that greatness already exists in our schools and we would like to give our members the opportunity to nominate their peers for recognition. One elementary and one secondary teacher will be selected during each nomination cycle.

Please be on the lookout for a digital nomination form. Our first nomination window will last from October 3 - 17.

We hope that you will participate in nominating a peer who embodies excellence.



Did You Know...?

By our estimates, SMEA advocacy put

\$10,000

back into the pockets of members this August. By educating members on their transfer rights, we were able to ensure that members were compensated fairly.

Did you know that you are entitled to two days of additional compensation (daily rate) for voluntary or involuntary transfers of school site, department, grade level, or being reassigned to another classroom? (Article XV, F-G). It literally pays to know the contract!

Executive Board Updates



Damon Gidner has been appointed as SMEA's new Bargaining and Grievances Chair. Damon has worked for SMUSD for 20 years -- 19 of those serving SMEA. Damon

has previously served as a Site Rep, Corresponding Secretary, Vice President and as a member of the Negotiations Team.



Mike Sterling has assumed the role of Membership Chair. Mike has previously served as a Site Rep and the Bargaining and Grievances Chair.



Is This a Contract Violation?

Being aware of your contract and feeling empowered to recognize violations is a key component of maintaining our strength as an association. Take time to familiarize yourself with the contract. It is posted on SMEA's website and on the District's website.

Dear "Concerned",

Your principal's plan is a clear violation of Article IX-A. Teachers are entitled to a duty-free lunch. Meaning, you cannot be required to work during your lunch.

To use the contract to assess possible violations, start at the table of contents. Find the appropriate section. If you have questions about what you read, see your site representative for clarification.

My Principal has scheduled a mandatory staff meeting for co-teachers during our lunchtime. Is this allowed?
-Concerned in Room 3

Contract Says...

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ARTICLE IX: HOURS

- A. During a regular school day the hours of service shall be rendered as follows. A work day is a unit of seven and one-half (7 1/2) hours of school based service per day inclusive of a minimum of a thirty (30) minute duty-free lunch plus a minimum of a five (5) minute pass period and at the K-5 level, a duty free a.m. recess period. Such hours of service shall be directed by the unit mem-

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Coming 2020: **SCHOOLS & COMMUNITIES FIRST**

The Schools & Communities First Act (SCFA) will hit the ballot box in November, 2020. This historic commercial property tax reform act would close corporate tax loopholes and bring much-needed funding to our schools and communities. It is NOT a new tax and does NOT impact residential property.

Reclaim Funding

Californians deserve better than to subsidize huge corporations that avoid paying millions in property tax while making billions worldwide. SCFA will close a corporate property tax loophole that has drained billions over 40 years and will reclaim \$11 billion annually to reinvest in our local schools and communities.

Fund Our Schools

California is the 5th largest economy in the world, but ranks in the bottom 10 in the country when it comes to per pupil spending. SCFA will restore funding to schools and colleges for smaller class sizes, better teacher pay, and more resources for schools. It is time for corporations to pay their fair share.

Homeowners Protected

Residential, agricultural, and small business property would not be affected. The reform only applies to a small fraction of wealthy commercial and industrial property owners. Commercial property would be assessed at fair market value and California would still remain the lowest property tax rate in the nation.