

# The TORRANCE TEACHER

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## We All Rise Together

### TTA & Partners Send a Message to School Board & Cabinet

TTA members, along with labor partner members from SEIU and CSEA, sent a message to the Board of Education on Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup>, about competitive pay and pay equity.

Carlos Anwandter, TTA President, spoke to the Board regarding an agenda item giving Superintendent Dr. Tim Stowe his fourth raise in 13 months. In his speech, Anwandter pointed out that Dr. Stowe has received a 42.28% increase in the same amount of time that frontline employees have received 23.74% increases. Other executive managers in the district have likewise received huge increases in the same amount of time. Anwandter was quick to point out that labor isn't against paying district administrators competitively, but that **we should all rise together**.

## Anatomy of TUSD Top Executive Investment

### Superintendent

- 2025 Superintendent Contract Pay
- Base Pay: \$363,316 (**24.44 % increase over 2020 salary**)
- Longevity Anniversary Increment: 12.25% = \$44,506 (**39.68% increase**)
- Doctoral Stipend: \$1,622.75
- Auto Allowance: \$5,971.50
- Total Pay = **\$415,416.25 (42.28% increase)**
- Up to 10 extra days paid at per diem rate: \$18,712.40
- **Total Pay w/ 10 extra days: \$434,128.65 (48.69% increase)**
- + Me-too Clause—verbal, not written

Right now, it appears that the Board is content to prioritize top executives in the district over prioritizing money for classrooms and those who work directly with children daily. In the past five years, labor has been able to negotiate salary increases equaling 89% of COLA funded to the district, while Dr. Stowe has received 159% of funded COLA. This isn't so much about Stowe as it is about the inequity in priorities. TTA has long held to the principles that money should be spent on students and that budgeting priorities should always center on the classroom first. The fact that in the past five years, TUSD has seen so much growth in the administrative ranks and in top administrative salaries while class size stagnates at large sizes and employee workload increases hardly demonstrates a classroom first mentality. Yet, educators keep getting the job done because it is labor's priority to put kids first.

TUSD is getting a lot of bang for its buck. Dr. Rosa Isiah shared the most recent California Dashboard information during the meeting. TUSD ranks #1 or #2 in all areas when compared to similar districts.

## TUSD Ranks #1 or #2 Compared to Similar Districts



- TUSD is one of 13 similar districts in the State with Enrollment between 15,000 and 30,000 and an Unduplicated Rate between 20% and 60%
- We ranked #1 in 5 out of 8 indicators - including Chronic Absenteeism



ELA

#1



Math

#1



Science

#1



ELPI

#1



CCI

#2



Chronic Abs

#1



Grad Rate

#2



Suspension

#2

Even in the areas that TUSD ranked #2, the district scored higher than previously. For example, TUSD remains in the blue on the dashboard with its highest graduation rate ever with a 97% graduation rate while the California state average is 87.8%. The main takeaway is that labor feels undervalued and disrespected when the district continues to commit to median pay for everyone but the top executives who earn top pay. Coupled with Dr. Keith Butler's remarks at the December Board meeting, the district's message to labor over the past few months has been that there's no more money to prioritize salary and benefits "above what we get in LCFF" because now reserves are what they have been historically rather than higher as they have been over the past few years. Michelle McKay Underwood of School Services also presented to the Board sharing a gloomy picture of the state budget. Yet, the Board voted 4-0, with Ms. Park abstaining, to increase Dr. Stowe's and other top executives' pay.

Also at the meeting, Cam-An Navarro spoke on behalf of the TTA Negotiations to present the Association's initial contract proposal. The entire contract expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>, so all articles in the collective bargaining agreement will be open and negotiable during this round of negotiations. The proposal can be found on the TTA website under the Collective Bargaining > Negotiations tabs along with the Bargaining Survey Results. This bargaining campaign is getting a slower start than expected because TUSD opted to wait until February to present their initial proposal. The public hearing should be at the March 2<sup>nd</sup> Board of Education meeting with bargaining set to commence in mid-March. In the meantime, TTA Leadership encourages members to continue showing up to Board of Education meetings and wearing blue every Thursday. More information on the February meeting is forthcoming.

## Quick Hits

**Prop 55 Extension Campaign:** TTA's campaign to gather signatures for the California Children's Education and Healthcare Protection Act of 2026 which extends Prop 55 revenues permanently is moving into its second phase. If you did not sign the petition the first time around, you will be hearing from TTA leaders to secure your signature. Remember that approval of the act does not add new taxes; it extends existing taxes and secures current funding structures that have lifted California's education system funding from bottom 5 in the nation to 31<sup>st</sup> in the nation. To not extend Prop 55 would be a tax cut for the wealthiest among us while harming students by cutting up to 1 of every 6 teachers in the state. **TUSD would lose more than \$48 million in funding should Prop 55 expire** resulting in mass layoffs locally. More information is to come.

**National Education Association Representative Assembly:** The annual NEA-RA will be hosted in Denver, Colorado this year. The RA is scheduled for July 3-7<sup>th</sup>. Members interested in attending may declare a local delegate and/or a state delegate. The Declaration of Candidacy window runs Jan. 5-30<sup>th</sup>. The deadline is no later than 4:00 PM on Friday, January 30<sup>th</sup> and that is a hard deadline with no declarations being accepted thereafter. For more information, visit the CTA website:

[2026 NEA RA State Declaration of Candidacy - California Teachers Association](#)

**Catastrophic Leave Bank:** The TTA Catastrophic Leave Bank has been entirely depleted and needs donations. All unit members are eligible to contribute to the Catastrophic Leave Bank on a voluntary basis. A unit member's contribution must be made on the appropriate form authorized by the unit member. Eligible sick leave credits must be donated at a minimum of one day and in full-day (6 hour) increments. To donate, visit the TTA website's Member Resources page where you can find the donation form and other pertinent information about the program.

**TTA and CTA Scholarships Available:** [Scholarships, Grants, and Awards - California Teachers Association](#) CTA is offering scholarships for members and members' dependent children. Visit the CTA website for more information about due dates. TTA Scholarships for dependent children are also available. Forms are due on Monday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, no later than 5:00 PM. Contact the TTA office for more information. TTA scholarship forms are not yet available online, but will be soon.

**ELA/ELD Instructional Materials Reviewers Needed:** Calling all K-8 educators! The California State Board of Education is looking for volunteers to fulfill the important role of ELA/ELD Instructional Materials Reviewer. This opportunity will allow educators to have a say in the selection of ELA/ELD instructional materials across California. Educators' voices are vital in this process. Applications are due by Feb. 13, 2026, at 5 p.m. Please note that it will ask for a resume at the end of the application. Deb Tabush, CTA State Council representative, suggests just putting together a quick one pager with education, employment, and leadership positions listed. Submit applications here: <https://surveys3.cde.ca.gov/s.asp?k=175348059242>

**Duarte Unified Educators Association Strike:** The TTA Representative Council approved a resolution of the Duarte Unified Educators Association as they have recently approved a strike vote as they seek a fair, reasonable, and just contract. DUEA is clear that their mission is to protect and promote the well-being of their members, improve teaching and learning conditions, advance the cause of free, universal, and quality public education, ensure the civil rights and dignity of all students, and to secure a just, equitable, and democratic society. The Association is demanding adequate health benefits, prep time for elementary teachers, and competitive salaries in comparison to neighboring districts. Their battles mirror our battles. As part of the resolution, you will be hearing more from TTA about DUEA's efforts to organize and prepare for a potential strike. 100% of their members voted in their strike vote, approving it by 97%.

**Portrait of a Graduate:** Teachers from several sites have reached out to TTA leadership sharing that their site administrators are asking them to take on more work by connecting lessons to TUSD's unilaterally adopted Portrait of a Graduate. While the district does have the right to adopt programs and policies, the Association retains the right to bargain the effects of these programs and policies—and retains the right to consult on educational objectives. Neither of which has happened since the program's adoption a year and half ago. TTA leaders are aware of the issues and analyzing how best to assist members at sites in addressing the issues. Site-based Collective Action Teams (CATs) will be playing a role in any rollout.

**Balderas Memorial Vigil:** A memorial vigil for Mrs. Jennifer Balderas will be held at the Walteria Elementary School quad on Thursday, January 29<sup>th</sup> between 6:00 and 7:00 PM. The program is slated to begin at 6:15. During the program, there will be memory cards available for anyone who would like to share a special memory, message, or words of love for Mrs. Balderas and her family. Anyone wishing to bring a photo, card, or flowers will have a designated time during the program to bring them forward. Mrs. Balderas was a devoted educator whose kindness, compassion, and love for children touched countless lives.

# TTA Board of Education Solidarity Roll Call

TTA members are encouraged to attend all the remaining school board meetings for the remainder of the school year. To assist with ensuring that our members' voices are heard during the upcoming negotiations, TTA leaders have asked for schools to sign up for dates to attend. Everyone is welcome even if your school hasn't signed up yet or if your school hasn't signed up on that specific night. Any and all members are encouraged to shirt up, show up, and speak up.

- Bring at least 5 TTA members from your site with you
- Wear your BLUE SHIRTS
- Meet at the EMB at 6:15 PM (Solidarity Tailgates will be in the parking lot of each meeting)
- Sit in the Boardroom with your TTA colleagues and watch the meeting
- You can also volunteer to SPEAK if you want. Talk to a TTA leader for more information and/or talking points.

<b>February 17 (Tuesday)</b>
School 1: LAUNCH Pre-school
School 2: West High School
School 3: Hickory Elementary School
School 4: Madrona Middle School
<b>March 2</b>
School 1: Hull Middle School
School 2: Jefferson Middle School
School 3: West High School
<b>March 16</b>
School 1: Bert Lynn Middle School
School 2: West High School
<b>April 20</b>
School 1: Arlington Elementary School
School 2: Yukon Elementary School
School 3: West High School
<b>May 18</b>
School 1: West High School



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