

The TORRANCE TEACHER

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We All Rise Together, pt. 2

Investment in Executives Outweighs Investment in Classroom

TTA members, along with labor partner members from SEIU and CSEA, continued sending a message to the Board of Education on Tuesday, February 17th. Labor’s message is clear: Investment in the top executives should not outweigh the investment in students’ classrooms. A rising tide should lift all boats, not some more than others.

In the last issue of *The Torrance Teacher*, we outlined the 40%+ increase in Superintendent Dr. Tim Stowe’s pay since 2020. Unfortunately, heavier investment in the superintendent than in the classroom is not an anomaly. Today we focus on the Deputy Superintendent, Dr. Keith Butler. He, along with other executive managers in the district, has likewise received larger increases in the same amount of time. TTA President Carlos Anwandter has been quick to point out that labor isn’t against paying district administrators competitively, but that **we should all rise together**. These numbers merely highlight that the Board of Education has disproportionately invested in executives over those working on the frontlines with students every day. TTA acknowledges that TUSD has invested in employees, but not to the extent that it has invested in top management in the District. TUSD has set sights on median salaries for employees while ensuring that executives are at the top of the scale.

Anatomy of TUSD Top Executive Investment

- **Deputy Superintendent**
- 2025-26 Deputy Superintendent Contract Pay
- Base Pay: \$294,783.27 (**36.47% increase over 2020 base pay**)
- Doctoral Stipend: \$1,622.75
- Total Pay = **\$296,406.02 (36.37% increase over 2020 total pay)**
- Up to 10 vacation days surrendered at per diem rate: \$11,934.55
- **Total Pay w/ 10 extra days: \$308,340.57 (41.85% increase)**
- + Me-too Clause

In recent days, labor partners have reported that Dr. Butler is criticizing TTA’s numbers saying that they are inaccurate. The only differences in our numbers are in what locally funded COLA was in 2020 and 2021—both numbers that TUSD has decreased since the last successor bargain. Those changes are minimal—and do not change the heart of our message. But reviewing TUSD numbers, so that we all understand where our differences are and why we differ is important. Here are the numbers presented by TUSD during the First Interim Report in December (we have highlighted the areas where we differ):

Salary Negotiation Settlement History Percentages 2020-21 to 2025-26

	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Total
State COLA	0.00%	5.07%	13.26%	8.22%	1.07%	2.30%	29.92%
TUSD Funded COLA	-1.14%	4.00%	11.41%	5.60%	-0.01%	2.23%	22.09%
Total TUSD ongoing raises (incl. sal. eq.)	0.00%	5.00%	8.10%	6.28%	1.00%	2.23%*	22.61%
		(6.0% + 2.1% eq.)			*Plus 1.66% benefits		24.27%
				(5.0% + 0.8% eq. + 0.48% Step 25/55)			

TTA’s records, which we have published multiple times with no push back from the District, show that in 2020-2021, TTA received 2.5% +\$1,000 off-schedule negotiated in 2019-2020 as a prospective raise. Our records also show COLA in 20-21 as being 2.29%. In 20-21, TTA negotiated a 2% prospective raise for 21-22, then in 21-22, negotiated 3% more retroactively for a total of 5% in that year in which the state COLA was 5.07%. At no time during those bargains did Dr. Butler or TUSD state that they were receiving less than state funded COLA. It wasn’t until 2024-2025 that TUSD lowered the amount of COLA received to 4% during that year. The total compensation number of 6.28% for 2023-2024 has never been shared with TTA until this report was given in December. So, we learned this number at the same time everyone else did—two years after the fact. And the funded COLA for last year varied greatly throughout the year from a -1% to a positive .28%. TUSD landed at -.01. We used 0. So, while TUSD claims our numbers aren’t correct, we believe that they are revising numbers in a way that doesn’t reflect the true financial bottom line in TUSD. Regardless of whose numbers we use, the exact amounts do not diminish our premise that TUSD has undervalued its employees while investing heavily in top management.

For the sake of argument, using TUSD’s numbers, puts labor at 109% of TUSD funded COLA and Dr. Stowe at 200% of TUSD funded COLA (as opposed to 89% and 153% respectively). Dr. Butler’s increase in total pay with extra days is at 189% using TUSD’s numbers. Using their numbers doesn’t make their case any stronger when our point is that TUSD is investing nearly twice as much in top executives than in labor that works directly with our community’s children every day.

Another caveat is that TUSD’s COLA numbers do not include all the new money that TUSD received over the course of those six years either. Ergo, TTA Leaders do not want to get mired down in playing TUSD’s COLA wars when numbers are so easily revised. Ultimately, the math doesn’t lie in that TUSD has found creative ways to compensate top management at nearly twice the rate of rank and file employees regardless of whose numbers we use. TUSD’s bottom line, how much they rollover from one year to the next reflects a very healthy and growing bank ending balance year after year. Considering that the 2024-2025 ending balance was estimated to be \$116,135,778 and it was actually \$132,954,245, it would not be out of the realm of possibility that the budgeted 2025-2026 ending balance is projected to be lower than what it will likely be as well. TUSD always uses conservative numbers. That in and of itself is not a bad thing, but it also shows that TUSD could prioritize more money towards students and employees in the 2026 bargain.

Year	2020-2021*	2021-2022*	2022-2023*	2023-2024*	2024-2025*	2025-2026**
General Fund	\$59,136,074	\$63,583,161	\$73,022,876	\$76,633,065	\$75,265,371	\$66,318,371
Restricted Fund	\$15,921,882	\$21,136,746	\$59,864,902	\$64,357,319	\$57,888,874	\$48,263,874
Total	\$75,057,957	\$84,719,907	\$132,887,778	\$140,990,384	\$132,954,245	\$114,582,245

TUSD General Fund Rollover 2020-2021 through 2025-2026

*From TUSD Unaudited Actuals
**From TUSD Budget

Again, our view of the Board of Education’s spending isn’t about Stowe or Butler. It is about the inequity in priorities. Why is the median good for labor but the top is what is good for management? TTA and our labor partners continue to hold to the principles that money should be spent on students and that budgeting priorities should always center on the classroom first. TUSD has seen so much growth in the administrative ranks and in top administrative salaries while class size stagnates and employee workload increases. This hardly demonstrates a classroom first mentality.

As expected, [TUSD sunshined their initial proposal](#) for the 2026 successor agreement at the board meeting on February 17th. The TTA Negotiations Team welcomes the District bringing a dialogue about class sizes, employee assignments, and hours of employment. These are issues that impact every student and employee in the District and should be the center of any long term negotiations. TTA and the District are set to begin negotiating on March 16th and March 18th. Every article in the contract is open, and both teams have set forward ambitious initial proposals (the TTA proposal can be found [HERE](#)). We will continue to show up and speak out about our priorities as this bargaining cycle ramps up. We will continue to fight for competitive compensation, workload relief, and educator agency. The Negotiation’s Team will keep members updated regularly as negotiations begin. The team looks forward to working in good faith with TUSD to resolve these longstanding issues, even if it takes a measured, multi-year plan to achieve. The broken salary equalization promise of building a plan has not been forgotten, and the team is eager to ensure that a plan that protects and respects our members is built and enacted. TTA Leaders invite all our members to join us at each Board of Education meeting in support of our bargain.

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 31st 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. Currently 52% of our members have signed the petitions. TTA Leaders will be reaching out to site representatives to assist.

National Education Association Representative Assembly: TTA has two candidates running as State Delegates to the NEA-RA. **Deb Tabush** (Riviera Elementary) and **America Moreno** (Yukon Elementary) have declared candidacy. Their names will appear on a CTA issued digital ballot with a voting window of February 17th-March 9th. TTA leadership encourages all members to vote for NEA-RA delegates. Even if you don't know most of the people, we have two who wish to represent you. Candidate statements will be available as well.

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](https://torranceteachers.org/scholarships/) 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 6th, no later than 5:00 PM. Contact the TTA office for more information. Learn more about the scholarships and find the forms online at <https://torranceteachers.org/scholarships/>.

WHO Award Nominations: It is the time of year where We Honor Ours (WHO)! The WHO Awards are awarded annually to a member of each local association in CTA. Any member of a local association can be nominated for WHO Award for demonstrating outstanding active service to the union during the last three years. The nomination form can be found on the TTA website [HERE](#) (at the bottom of the home page). Nominations are due Friday, March 6th by 5:00 PM.

For Tax Return Information:

TK-12 - 2025 TTA MEMBERSHIP DUES

<u>FTE 61-100%</u> CAT 1	<u>FTE 34-50%</u> CAT 2A	<u>FTE 51-60%</u> CAT 2B	<u>FTE 25% or Less</u> CAT 3A	<u>FTE 26-33%</u> CAT 3B
\$1,236.40	\$639.40	\$735.60	\$341.65	\$389.30

ADULT EDUCATION - 2025 TTA MEMBERSHIP DUES

More than 21 Weekly Hours – CAT 2A	20 Weekly Hours or Less – CAT 3A
\$639.40	\$341.65

TTA Board of Education Solidarity Roll Call

TTA members are encouraged to attend all the 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. This list will be updated after Rep Council on February 19th. 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.

March 2
School 1: Hull Middle School
School 2: Jefferson Middle School
School 3: West High School
March 16
School 1: Bert Lynn Middle School
School 2: West High School
April 20
School 1: Arlington Elementary School
School 2: Yukon Elementary School
School 3: West High School
May 18
School 1: West High School



TTA EXECUTIVE BOARD ELECTION 2026-28

AVAILABLE SEATS

OFFICERS: PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT TREASURER <i>2 Year Term / 3 Seats / Elected At-Large</i>
ELEMENTARY DIRECTORS <i>2 Year Term / 4 Seats / Elected At-Large from Area</i> CENTRAL AREA: Adams, Fern, Hickory, Torrance El., Wood NORTH AREA: Arlington, Carr, Edison, Lincoln, Yukon SOUTH AREA: Arnold, Riviera, Seaside, Waltheria WEST AREA: Anza, Towers, Victor
MIDDLE SCHOOL DIRECTORS <i>2 Year Term / 2 Seats / Elected At-Large in Middle Schools</i>
HIGH SCHOOL DIRECTORS <i>2 Year Term / 4 Seats (One Seat per High School)</i> North High South High Torrance High West High
AT-LARGE DIRECTOR <i>2 Year Term / 1 Seat</i> Elected At-Large from: Adult Transition Program, EMB, Drevno Community Day School, Griffith Adult School, Hamilton Adult School, Levy Adult School, Launch Preschool, Kurt T Shery Continuation School, Special Education Office

ELECTION TIMELINE

- February 5** - Election timeline and available seats announced at Executive Board Meeting
 - February** - Election timeline and available seats published in *The Torrance Teacher*
 - February 19** - Election timeline and available seats announced at Rep Council
 - March 6** - Declaration of Candidacy forms due at TTA's office by 5 PM
 - March 19** - Election chair announces slate of declared candidates at Rep Council
 - Late March/Early April** - Declared candidates are published in *The Torrance Teacher*
 - April 23 Rep Council Meeting:**
 1. Election chair announces slate of declared candidates. Final call for candidate nominations from floor.
 2. Nominations close. Final slate established.
 3. If a seat has only one declared candidate after nominations close, Rep Council may vote to waive the ballot for that seat and elect the lone candidate by acclamation. If no candidate has been declared for a seat, then the ballot shall be automatically waived for this seat. If the seat is still open after a special election, the President has the discretion to appoint representation for the impacted members. (*TTA Bylaws Article VI-Section 12*)
- NOTE:** *The President, Vice President, and Treasurer will be elected via a ballot in a members-only election, not by acclamation at Rep Council in April. CTA Elections will run the election for the CTA State Council Rep and Alternate.*

AN ELECTION WILL COMMENCE FOR OFFICERS AND ANY CONTESTED SEATS.

- May 4** – The final slate of candidates will be printed in *The Torrance Teacher*.
- May 11** – The office will deliver ballot boxes and election material to school sites/site reps.
- May 12-15** – Election dates for TTA Executive Board 2026-28.
- May 15**
 - 3:30 PM - Election ends at sites at 3:30 PM. Ballot boxes or ballot envelopes, rosters, and any election materials must be dropped off at TTA's office by 5 PM.
 - 5:30 – Election committee counts ballots. Candidates notified. Results published in *The Torrance Teacher*.
- June 4** - TTA Executive Board Installation Dinner

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